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Birds and Flowers

AND

OTHER COUNTRY THINGS.

BY

MARY HOWITT.

Birds and Flowers

Mary Botham Howitt

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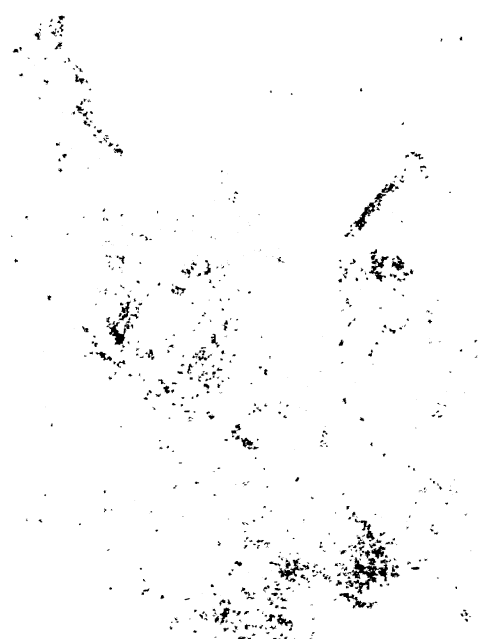


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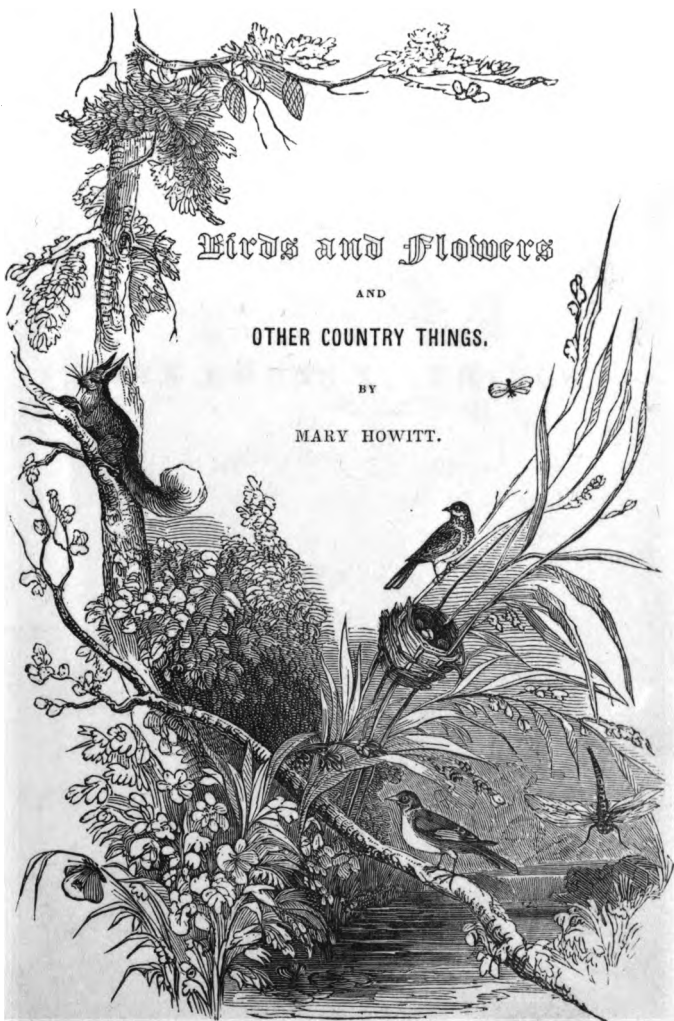


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BOSTON:

WEEKS, JORDAN & COMPANY.

1839.

Tur 1839.6

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Richard Peters, Jr.

MARDEN & KIMBALL, PRINTERS,
No. 3 School Street.

PREFACE.

THIS volume has been written literally among Birds and Flowers, and has been my pleasant occupation through the last summer months; and now it is completed, my earnest wish is, that it may convey to many a heart a relish for the enjoyment of quiet, country pleasures; a love for every living creature, and that strong sympathy which must grow in every pure heart for the great human family.

WEST END COTTAGE, ESHER,
SEPTEMBER 28.

TO
JOHN HENRY
AND
WILLIAM GODFREY HOWITT,
THESE POEMS,
SOME OF WHICH THEY WERE THE FIRST TO READ AND APPROVE,
ARE INSCRIBED
BY
THEIR AFFECTIONATE AUNT.

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BIRDS AND FLOWERS.

THE STORMY PETEREL.

O Stormy, stormy Peterel,
Come rest thee, bird, awhile ;
There is no storm, believe me,
Anigh this summer isle.

Come, rest thy waving pinions ;
Alight thee down by me ;
And tell me somewhat of the lore
Thou learnest on the sea !

Dost hear beneath the ocean
The gathering tempest form ?
See'st thou afar the little cloud
That grows into the storm ?

How is it in the billowy depths —
Doth sea-weed heave and swell?
And is a sound of coming wo
Rung from each caverned shell?

Dost watch the stormy sunset
In tempests of the west;
And see the old moon riding slow
With the new moon on her breast?

Dost mark the billows heaving
Before the coming gale;
And scream for joy of every sound
That turns the seaman pale?

Are gusty tempests mirth to thee?
Lov'st thou the lightning's flash:
The booming of the mountain waves —
The thunder's deafening crash?

O stormy, stormy Peterel,
Thou art a bird of wo!
Yet would I thou couldst tell me half
Of the misery thou dost know!

There was a ship went down last night —
A good ship and a fair;
A costly freight within her lay,
And many a soul was there!

The night-black storm was over her, .
And 'neath, the caverned wave :
In all her strength she perished,
Nor skill of man could save.

The cry of her great agony
Went upward to the sky ;
She perished in her strength and pride,
Nor human aid was nigh.

But thou, O stormy Peterel,
Went'st screaming o'er the foam ; —
Are there no tidings from that ship
Which thou canst carry home ?

Yes ! He who raised the tempest up,
Sustained each drooping one ;
And God was present in the storm,
Though human aid was none !

THE POOR MAN'S GARDEN.

Ah yes, the poor man's garden !
It is great joy to me,
This little, precious piece of ground
Before his door to see !

The rich man has his gardeners, —
His gardeners young and old ;
He never takes a spade in hand,
Nor worketh in the mould.

It is not with the poor man so, —
Wealth, servants, he has none ;
And all the work that's done for him
Must by himself be done.

All day upon some weary task
He toileth with good will ;
And back he comes, at set of sun,
His garden-plot to till.

The rich man in his garden walks,
And 'neath his garden trees ;
Wrapped in a dream of other things,
He seems to take his ease.

One moment he beholds his flowers,
The next they are forgot :
He eateth of his rarest fruits
As though he ate them not.

It is not with the poor man so ; —
He knows each inch of ground,
And every single plant and flower
That grows within its bound.

He knows where grow his wall-flowers,
And when they will be out ;
His moss-rose, and convolvulus
That twines his pales about.

He knows his red sweet-williams ;
And the stocks that cost him dear, —
That well-set row of crimson stocks,
For he bought the seed last year.

And though unto the rich man
The cost of flowers is nought,
A sixpence to a poor man
Is toil, and care, and thought.

And here is his potato-bed,
All well-grown, strong, and green ;
How could a rich man's heart leap up
At anything so mean !

But he, the poor man, sees his crop,
And a thankful man is he,
For he thinks all through the winter
How rich his board will be !

And how his merry little ones
Beside the fire will stand,
Each with a large potato
In a round and rosy hand.

The rich man has his wall-fruits,
And his delicious vines ;
His fruit for every season ;
His melons and his pines.

The poor man has his gooseberries ;
His currants white and red ;
His apple and his damson tree,
And a little strawberry bed.

A happy man he thinks himself,
A man that's passing well, —
To have some fruit for the children,
And some besides to sell.

Around the rich man's trellised bower
Gay, costly creepers run ;
The poor man has his scarlet-beans
To screen him from the sun.

And there before the little bench,
O'ershadowed by the bower,
Grow southern-wood and lemon-thyme,
Sweet-pea and gilliflower ;

And pinks and clove-carnations,
Rich-scented, side by side ;
And at each end a hollyhock,
With an edge of londonpride.

And here comes the old grandmother,
When her day's work is done ;
And here they bring the sickly babe
To cheer it in the sun.

And here, on Sabbath-mornings,
The good man comes to get
His Sunday nosegay, moss-rose bud,
White pink, and mignonette.

And here on Sabbath-evenings,
Until the stars are out,
With a little one in either hand,
He walketh all about.

For though his garden-plot is small,
Him doth it satisfy ;
For there's no inch of all his ground
That does not fill his eye.

It is not with the rich man thus ;
For though his grounds are wide,
He looks beyond, and yet beyond,
With soul unsatisfied.

Yes ! in the poor man's garden grow
Far more than herbs and flowers ; —
Kind thoughts, contentment, peace of mind,
And joy for weary hours.



THE APPLE-TREE.

Let them sing of bright red gold ;
Let them sing of silver fair ;
Sing of all that 's on the earth,
All that 's in the air ;
All that 's in the sunny air,
All that 's in the sea ;
And I 'll sing a song as rare
Of the apple-tree !
The red-bloomed apple-tree ;
The red-cheeked apple-tree ;
That 's the tree for you and me,
The ripe, rosy apple-tree !

Learned men have learned books,
Which they ponder night and day ;
Easier leaves than theirs I read, —
Blossoms pink and white ;
Blossom-leaves all pink and white,
Wherein I can see
Charactered, as clear as light,
The old apple-tree ;
The gold-cheeked apple-tree ;
The red-streaked apple-tree ;

All the fruit that groweth on
The ripe rosy apple-tree !

Autumn comes, and our good-man,
Soon as harvest toil is o'er,

Speculates on apple-crops —

Be they less or more ;

I could tell him ; less or more

Is well known to me ;

I have eyes that see the core

Of the apple-tree ;

The old, mossy apple-tree ;

The young, glossy apple-tree ;

Scathed or sound, the country round,

I know every apple-tree !

Winter comes, as winter will,

Bringing dark days, frost, and rime ;

But the apple is in vogue

At the Christmas-time ;

At the merry Christmas-time

Folks are full of glee ;

Then they bring out apples prime,

Of the primest tree ;

Then you the roast-apple see,

While they toast the apple-tree,

Singing, with a jolly chime,

Of the brave old apple-tree !

THE HERON.

Lo ! there the hermit of the waste,
The ghost of ages dim,
The fisher of the solitudes,
Stands by the river's brim !

Old heron, in the feudal times,
Beside the forest stream,
And by the moorland waters,
Thus didst thou love to dream.

And over towers and castles high,
And o'er the armed men,
Skirmishing on the border-lands,
Or crouching in the glen ;

Thy heavy wings were seen to flit,
Thy azure shape was known
To pilgrim and to anchorite,
In deserts scorched and lone.

Old Heron, in those feudal times
Thou wast in dangerous grace,
Secured by mandates and by laws
All for the royal chase.

No meaner head might plot thy death
Than one which wore a crown ;
No meaner hand might loose the shaft,
From the skies to strike thee down.

And out came trooping courtly dames,
And men of high degree,
On steeds caparisoned in gold,
With bridles ringing free.

Came king and queen ; came warrior stout ;
Came lord and lady fair,
All gallant, beautiful, and bold,
Into the autumn air.

The abbot and the bishop grave,
The monk with crown new-shorn,
Who sore did rew their ravaged stew *
In the last Lent forlorn.

The keepers with their dogs in leash ;
The falconers before,
Who proudly on their sturdy wrists
The hooded tercel bore.

And in thy solitary haunts
By stream or sedgy mere,

* Fish-pond.

The laugh, the shout, the cries of dogs
And men, came to thine ear.

And starting from thy reverie,
And springing from the bent,
Into the air, from joyous hearts,
Another shout was sent.

Up, up, into the azure skies
On circling pinions strong,
Fair eyes pursued thy mounting course
While the falcon sped along.

Up, up, into the azure skies
Thy strenuous pinions go,
While shouts and cries, and wondering eyes
Still reach thee from below ;
But higher and higher, like a spirit of fire,
Still o'er thee hangs thy foe ;

Thy cruel foe, still seeking
With one down-plunging aim,
To strike thy precious life
Forever from thy frame !

But doomed perhaps, as down he darts
Swift as the rushing wind,
Impaled upon thy upturned beak,
To leave his own behind.

Old Heron, all those times are past,
Those jocund troops are fled ;
The king, the queen, the keepers green,
The dogs, the hawks are dead !

In many a minster's solemn gloom,
In shattered abbeys lone,
Lie all thy crowned enemies,
In midnight vaults of stone !

The towers are torn, the gates outworn,
Portcullis, moat, and mound
Are vanished all, or faintly mark
Some rarely-trodden ground.

O'er all those abbeys, convents, all
Those chantries and crosses,
Where thou didst glide past in thy pride,
Grow tawny ferns and mosses.

Where banners waved, the ivy grows ; —
Baronial times are o'er !
The forests now are cornfields green,
Green is the lakelet's shore.

Where grew the furze, now runs the fence ;
Where waved the wild-rush free,
And whistled moorland-grasses sere,
Fat cattle roam the lea.

The bow is gone, the hawk is thrown
Forever from the hand ;
And now we live a bookish race,
All in a cultured land.

Yet here and there some remnant
Of those old woodland times ;
Some waste lies brown ; some forest spreads ;
Some rocky streamlet chimes.

And there, beside the waters,
On moorland and on wold,
I find thee watching still,
Thou fisherman of old.

Oh fair, fair is the forest,
When summer is in prime !
And I love to lie by mountain lake,
On its slopes of heath and thyme !

In the thyme so richly fragrant,
In the heath that blooms so fair,
And list the quaint bird-voices
From the moorland and the air.

All those that lead their sweetest lives
Far from the haunt of men,
Are sending forth their gladness
In many a wild cry then.

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The curlew and the plover,
The gor-cock on the brae,
Send, with the singing of the lark,
Their voices far away !

The coot and moor-hen from the reeds,
Or where the waters run,
Crystal and warm and glittering,
O'er the pebbles in the sun.

And from the air, in circling flight,
Comes suddenly the crowd
Of all the wild-duck army,
With pinions rustling loud ;

And dashing down into the lake,
The splashing waters bound
In drops and showers of silver,
And in snow-flakes all around.

Such is the joy that wakens,
That clamors, and that lives,
In all the winged creatures,
Where nature still survives ;

Where nature still survives
In her regions wild and free ;
So lives in all her creatures,
Old fisherman, but thee !

Whene'er I meet thee, Heron,
By river broad and deep,
Where mountain-torrents run and moan,
Or ponded waters sleep ;

By turns upon the naked hills ;
In stony regions grey,
Or wading in the sounding sea
Amid the hissing spray :

Whene'er I see thee, Heron,
Thy cheer is silent still ;
Solemnly watching by the wave,
Or o'er the dusky hill,

Waving thy shadowy wings
In motion grave and slow,
Like a spirit of the solemn past
That museth on its wo !

Like one that in all present joy
Finds no congenial tone,
For his heart is in the perished past
And seeketh that alone !

Then hail to thee, old Heron,
Flit on from dream to dream ;
Be yet the watcher on the shore,
The spirit of the stream ;

For still at sight of thee come back
The storied times of old ;
The jovial hawking-train, the chase,
The sturdy bowmen bold.

Still wandering over cultured fields,
Or 'mid the human throng,
Come back the feudal castle,
The harper and his song.

And it is pleasant thus to dream
In this kingdom of the free,
Now laws are strong and roads are good,
Of outlaw 'neath his tree.

Now knowledge falls like sunshine,
And peace walks in our towns —
Oh pleasant are the feudal days
And the bloody strife of crowns !

Then hail to thee, old Heron !
Flit on to lakes and streams ;
And by their waters dreaming,
Still prompt these pleasant dreams !

THE ROSE OF MAY.

Ah, there 's the lily, marble pale,
The bonny broom, the cistus frail,
The rich sweet-pea, the iris blue,
The lark-spur with its peacock hue :
Each one is fair, yet hold I will
That the Rose of May is fairer still.

'T is grand 'neath palace walls to grow ;
To blaze where lords and ladies go ;
To hang o'er marble founts, and shine
In modern gardens trim and fine ; —
But the Rose of May is only seen
Where the great of other days have been.

The house is mouldering stone by stone ;
The garden-walks are overgrown ;
The flowers are low, the weeds are high ;
The fountain-stream is choked and dry ;
The dial-stone with moss is green,
Where'er the Rose of May is seen.

The Rose of May its pride displayed
Along the old stone ballustrade ;

And ancient ladies, quaintly dight,
In its pink blossoms took delight,
And on the steps would make a stand,
To scent its sweetness, fan in hand.

Long have been dead those ladies gay ;
Their very heirs have passed away ;
And their old portraits, prim and tall,
Are mouldering in the mouldering hall ;
The terrace and the balustrade
Lie broken, weedy and decayed.

But, lithe and tall, the Rose of May
Shoots upward through the ruin grey,
With scented flower, and leaf pale-green,
Such rose as it hath ever been ;
Left, like a noble deed, to grace
The memory of an ancient race !

What exact species of rose this is I do not know ;
it appears not to be approved of in modern gardens ;
at least, if it be, it is so much altered by cultivation
as to have lost much of its primitive character.
I saw it in three different situations in Nottinghamshire.
In the small remains of gardens and old labyrinthine shrubbery at Awthorpe Hall, —
which, when we were there, had just been taken

down, — the residence of the good Col. John Hutchinson and his sweet wife Lucy ; — in the very gardens which, as she relates in his life, he laid out and took so much pleasure in. It was growing also, with tall shoots and abundance of flowers, in the most forlorn of gardens, at an old place called Burton Grange, a house so desolate and deserted as to have gained from a poetical friend of ours the appropriate name of *The Dead House*. It was a dreary and most lonesome place ; the very bricks of which it was built were bleached by long exposure to wind and weather ; — there seemed no life within or about it. Every trace of furniture and wainscot was gone from its interior, and its principal rooms were the depositories of old ploughs and disused ladders ; yet still its roof, floors, and windows were in decent repair. It had once upon a time been a well-conditioned house ; had been moated, and its garden-wall had been terminated by stately stone pillars surmounted by well-cut urns, one of which, at the time we were there, lay overgrown with grass in the ground beneath ; the other, after a similar fall, had been replaced, but with the wrong end uppermost. To add still more to its lonesomeness, thick, wild woods encompassed it on three sides, whence of an evening, and often too in the course of the day, came the voices of owls and other gloomy wood-creatures.

“ There’s not a flower in the garden,” — said a

woman, who with her husband and child we found to our astonishment inhabiting what had once been the scullery,—“not a flower but feverfew and the rose of May, and you’ll not think it worth getting.” She was mistaken; I was delighted to find this sweet and favorite rose in so ruinous a situation.

Again, we found it in the gardens of Annesley Hall, that most poetical of old mansions; and the ancient housekeeper, at that time its sole inhabitant, pointed out this flower with a particular emphasis. “And here’s the rose of May,” said she, drawing out a slender spray from a tangle of jessamine that hung about the stone-work of the terrace; “a main pretty thing, though there’s little store set by it nowadays!”



THE DOR-HAWK.

FERN-OWL, Churn-owl, or Goat-sucker,
Night-jar, Dor-hawk, or whate'er
Be thy name among a dozen, —
Whip-poor-Wills and Who-are-you's cousin,
Chuck-Will's-widow's near relation,
Thou art at thy night vocation,
Thrilling the still evening air !

In the dark brown wood beyond us,
Where the night lies dusk and deep ;
Where the fox his furrow maketh,
Where the tawny owl awaketh
Nightly from his day-long sleep ;

There Dor-hawk is thy abiding,
Meadow green is not for thee ;
While the aspen branches shiver,
'Mid the roaring of the river,
Comes thy chirring voice to me.

Bird, thy form I never looked on,
And to see it do not care ;

Thou hast been, and thou art only
As a voice of forests lonely,
 Heard and dwelling only there.

Bringing thoughts of dusk and shadow ;
 Trees huge-branched in ceaseless change ;
Pallid night-moths, spectre-seeming ;
All a silent land of dreaming,
 Indistinct and large and strange.

Be thou thus, and thus I prize thee
 More than knowing thee face to face,
Head and beak and leg and feather,
Kept from harm of touch and weather,
 Underneath a fine glass-case.

I can read of thee, and find out
 How thou fliest, fast or slow ;
Of thee in the north and south too,
Of thy great moustachioed mouth too,
 And thy Latin name also.

But, Dor-hawk, I love thee better
 While thy voice unto me seems
Coming o'er the evening meadows,
From a dark brown land of shadows,
 Like a pleasant voice of dreams !

This singular bird, which is found in every part of the old world, as well in the cold regions of Siberia as in the hot jungles of India and the lion-haunted forests of Africa, has, as we have said, a large class of relations also in America: the whip-poor-will, the willy-come-go, the work-away, and the who-are-you? being all of the same family. In Africa and among the American Indians, these birds are looked upon with reverence or fear; for, by some they are supposed to be haunted by the dead, and by others to be obedient to gloomy or evil spirits. The Dor-hawk of our own country has been subject to slander, as his name of the *goat-sucker* shews. This name originated of course in districts where goats were used for milking, and furnished, no doubt, an excuse for the false herd who stole the milk and blamed the bird.

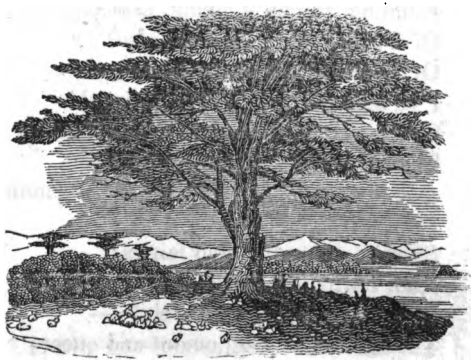
The Dor-hawk, like the owl, is not seen in the day; and like it also is an inhabitant of wild and gloomy scenes; heathy tracks abounding in fern; moors, and old woods. It is so regular in the time of beginning its nightly cry, that good old Gilbert White declares it appeared to him to strike up exactly when the report of the Portsmouth evening gun was heard. He says, also, that its voice, which resembles the loud purring of a cat, occasions a singular vibration even in solid buildings; for that as

he and some of his neighbors sate in a hermitage on a steep hill-side, where they had been taking tea, a Dor-hawk alighted on the little cross at the top, and uttered his cry, making the walls of the building sensibly vibrate, to the wonder of all the company.

I can give no anecdotes of the bird from my own experience. I know him best by his voice, heard mostly from scenes of a wild and picturesque character, in the gloom and shadow of evening, or in the deep calm of summer moonlight. I heard him first in a black, solemn-looking wood, between Houghton Tower and Pleasington Priory in Lancashire. Since then I have become familiar with his voice in the pleasant woods of Winter-down, and Claremont, in Surrey.

But a noble, Christian merchant-ship,
To sail upon the sea.

Then sing for the Oak-tree,
The monarch of the wood ;
Sing for the Oak-tree,
That groweth green and good ;
That groweth broad and branching
Within the forest shade ;
That groweth now, and yet shall grow,
When we are lowly laid !



THE CAROLINA PARROT.

PARROTS, with all their cleverness, are not capable of keeping up a dialogue ; otherwise we might suppose something like the following to be in character with their humor and experience.

POLL'S MISTRESS.

I've heard of imp, I've heard of sprite ;
Of fays and fairies of the night ;
Of that renowned fiend Hobgoblin,
Running, racing, jumping, hobbling ;
Of Puck, brimful of fun ; also
Of roguish Robin Goodfellow ;
I've seen a hearth where, as is told,
Came Hobthrush in the days of old,
To make the butter, mend the linen,
And keep the housewife's wheel a-spinning.
I've heard of pigmies, pixies, lares,
Shoirim, gemedim, and fairies :
And, Parrot, on my honest word,
I hardly think thou art a bird ; —
Thou art some pixy, quaint and queer ;
Thou art not canny, Poll, I fear !

Look at that impish leer of thine ;
List to thy scream, thy shout, thy whine,
And none will doubt but thou must be
A creature of the faery.
Or tell me Poll, art thou not kin
To Jack-o'-lantern ? Come, begin !
Answer me, Poll, was 't 'mong the fairies
Thou learnt thy many strange vagaries ?
Speak, pretty Poll !

POLL.

Well, I don't care if I tell you all.
You've got some company, I see ; a short gentleman
and a tall ;
Many ladies, too, altogether two or three dozens.
I should not wonder if they are some of your uncles
and cousins !
Pray am not I a very fine bird,
Green, and yellow, and scarlet ? —
Upon my word,
That man has a coat on like our Captain !

CAPTAIN.

Poll, how do you do, my dear ?
You look well ; it's fine living here !

POLL.

Ha, Captain, how do *you* do ? — Captain, your health,
I say ;

Captain, I'll have the pleasure of drinking your health
to-day ! ha ! ha ! ha !

I'm very glad to see you ! — You remember, perhaps,
That wood in Carolina, the guns and all the traps ; —
To be sure you do ! — Ladies, I'm a Carolina bird, —
Some come from the East-Indies, from the Cape too,
I've heard ;

But I'm of Carolina — to the Big-bone-lick I've been :
Now in that country there *is* something to be seen !
Our Captain knows *that* ! Ay, Captain, I say,
Do you remember crossing the Cedar Swamp one
particular day,

When I got out of your pocket and flew away ?
Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! How it makes me laugh !
You'd a pretty chase after me ! — ha ! ha ! a pretty
chase !

And I sat in the hickory trees, laughing in your face !
Ha ! ha ! ha ! how I did laugh !

What cypress-berries, cockle-burrs, and beech-nuts
grew there !

You may look all this country over, and find none
anywhere.

And what fun it was — me, and a thousand beside,
To fly in the merry sunshine through those forests
wide,

And build our nests — Oh, what nests we had ! —
Did you ever see one of our nests, Captain ? eh,
my lad ?

CAPTAIN.

I've heard of nests of cinnamon,
With the great Phœnix set thereon ;
And swallows' nests, so rich and sweet,
Of which the Chinese people eat ;
But of *your* nests I never heard,
What kind are they, I pray thee, bird ?

PARROT.

Nests ! ha ! ha ! ha ! what sort of nests should they be ?
You may fancy if you please, but you'll never know
from me !

I never blab, not I ! What sort of nest is built ?

Ha ! ha ! ha ! with sheets and blankets and a fine
Marseilles quilt, ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

Put it down in your little book, — a four-post bed, I
say,

With damask moreen hangings, and made every day,
ha ! ha ! ha !

Oh, how it makes me laugh ! ha ! ha ! ha !

I shall split my sides with laughing some of these
days ! ha ! ha ! ha !

CAPTAIN.

Come now, you silly prate-a-pace,
Tell us about that Big-bone place,
Where our acquaintance first began ;
And of those swamps untrod by man,

Where you came, impudent and merry,
For cockle-burr and hackle-berry.

PARROT.

Of the Big-bone lick, did you say ? Ay, we used to
go there,

A parrot's very fond of salt ! I really declare
I've seen ten thousand of us there altogether, —
A beautiful sight it was in fine summer weather,
Like a grand velvet carpet, of orange, green, and
yellow,

Covering the ground ! Ah, captain ! my good fellow,
I had reason to rue the day you came there with
your gun !

I would laugh if I could, but to me it was no fun—
heigh-ho !

No fun at all, captain, heigh-ho !

CAPTAIN.

Nay, Poll, cheer up, you're better here
Than at the Big-bone lick, my dear !

PARROT.

Captain how you talk ! we parrots love each other —
There you shot dozens of us, — my father and my
mother, —

I shall not forget it in a hurry, — what wailing and
crying,

What flying round and round there was ! What comforting the dying !

You, yourself, laid down your gun, — overcome by the sight,

And said you would not shoot again, at least that night !

Heigh-ho ! I am just ready to cry,

And I think I shall cry before I have done !

(She cries like a child.)

There, now, I am better ; but my throat is quite hot ;

Can't I have a glass of water ? — *(She coughs.)*

Bless me, what a cold I've got !

Do shut that window, Jenny, or we shall all die of cold ;

And mend the fire, can't you, as you already have been told !

And let's have a cup of tea, for I'm just tired to death.

What a shocking cold it is ! and I'm so short of breath. — *(She coughs again.)*

(She speaks in another voice.)

Tea's ready, if you please. Ready is it ? with the water in the pot ?

Yes, ma'am. Well, then, I'll go and have my tea, while the muffin's hot ! *[Exit POLL.]*

The Parrot of which we have been reading, may be supposed to have been the one of which so interesting an account is given by Wilson in his American Ornithology. It was taken at the Big-bone-lick, where he witnessed the extreme affection and strong sympathy which the parrots have for each other, and of which we have imagined our bird to speak. Its merriment, too, respecting the nests of the tribe, may pass as natural, considering the little light Wilson could obtain on the subject, and the vivacious mockery of the bird's disposition, even if it had the power of giving him the requisite information.

The parrot has been made to speak of her travels with "the captain" through the morasses and cedar-swamps, and of the trouble she gave him — "when many a time," says he, (Wilson) "I was tempted to abandon it." "And in this manner," he goes on to say, "I carried it upwards of a thousand miles in my pocket, where it was exposed all day to the jolting of the horse, but regularly liberated at meal-times and in the evening, at which it always expressed great satisfaction." The Chickasaw and the Choctaw Indians, among whom he was traveling, collected about him whenever he stopped, men, women and children, laughing great-

ly at his novel companion. *Kelinky* was the name the Chickasaws called the parrot; but hearing the name of Poll, they immediately adopted it; and through Poll's medium, he and the Indians always became very sociable. "On arriving," says Wilson, "at Mr. Dunbar's, below Natchez, I procured a cage, and placed it under the piazza, where, by its call, it soon attracted the passing flocks, such is the attachment they have for each other. Numerous parties frequently alighted on the trees immediately above, keeping up a continual conversation with the prisoner. One of these I slightly wounded in the wing, and the pleasure Poll expressed on meeting with this new companion, was really amusing. She crept close up to it, as it hung on the side of the cage; chattered to it in a loud tone of voice, as if sympathising in its misfortunes; scratched about its head and neck with her bill; and both, at night, nestled as close as possible to each other, sometimes Poll's head being thrust among the plumage of the other. On the death of this companion, she appeared restless and inconsolable for several days. On reaching New-Orleans, I placed a looking-glass inside the place where she usually sat, and the instant she perceived her image, all her former fondness seemed to return, so that she could scarcely absent herself from it for a moment. It was evident that she was completely deceived. Always when evening drew on, and often during the day,

she laid her head close to that of the image in the glass, and began to doze with great composure and satisfaction. In a short time she had learned to know her name ; to answer and come when called on ; to climb up my clothes, sit on my shoulder, and eat from my mouth. I took her with me to sea, determined to persevere in her education."

And, to give an ending rather different from Mr. Wilson's, here we have presented her to our readers in the possession of an English lady, and with her education, for a parrot, very complete.



THE RAVEN.

RAVEN on the blasted tree,
Sitting croaking dolefully,
I would have a word with thee !

Raven, thou art silent now
On the splintered forest bough,
Glancing on me thy bright eye,
I shall ask, — do thou reply.
In that far-gone, awful time,
When the earth was purged of crime,
And old Noah and the seven
In the gopher-ark were driven.

RAVEN.

I was there.

POET.

I know it bird.
And when rain no more was heard
Plashing down in torrents wild ;
When the face of heaven grew mild,
And from mountain-summits brown

The subsiding floods went down,
And the prisoned creatures fain
Scented the young earth again ;
Wherefore when the patriarch forth
Sent thee to look round the earth
And bring tidings to his door,
Cam'st thou to the ark no more ?

RAVEN.

Narrow was the ark, but wide
And fair the earth on every side ;
And all around in glens and plains
Lay of life the lorn remains ;
Man and beast and bird, like seed
Scattered on the harvest mead :
How could I return to bear
Tidings ? I was feasting there !

POET.

Raven ha ! I thought the same.
But in after times ye came,
To the exiled prophet good
Bringing him his daily food.

RAVEN.

Yes — by Cherith-brook there grew
Mighty cedars not a few ;
And a raven-tree was there
Spreading forth its branches bare.

'T was our home, when thither ran
From the king an awful man,
Robed and sandaled as in haste,
With a girdle round his waist ;
Strongly built, with brow severe,
And the bearing of a seer.
Down by Cherith-brook he lay ;
And at morn and set of day
Thus a voice unto us said,
" By you must this man be fed ;
Bring him flesh and bring him bread."
And by us he was supplied,
Duly morn and eventide,
Until Cherith-brook was dried.

POET.

Wondrous miracle of love !

RAVEN.

Doth it thus thy spirit move ?
Deeper truth than this shall reach thee,
Christ he bade the raven teach thee :
They plough not, said he, nor reap,
Nor have costly hoards to keep ;
Storehouse none, nor barn have they,
Yet God feeds them every day !
Fret not then your souls with care
What to eat, or what to wear,

He who hears the ravens' cry
Looketh with a pitying eye
On his human family.

POET.

Raven, thou art spirit-cheering ;
What thou say'st is worth the hearing ;
Never more be it averred
That thou art a doleful bird !



FLOWER COMPARISONS.

AN, sweet cousin Blanche, let's see
What's the flower resembling thee !
With those dove-like eyes of thine,
And thy fair hair's silken twine ;
With thy low, broad forehead, white
As marble, and as purely bright ;
With thy mouth so calm and sweet,
And thy dainty hands and feet ;
What's the flower most like thee ?

Blossom of the orange-tree !

Where may the bright flower be met
That can match with Margaret, —
Margaret, stately, staid, and good,
Growing up to womanhood ;
Loving, thoughtful, wise, and kind,
Pure in heart and strong in mind ;
Eyes deep-blue as is the sky
When the full moon sails on high ;
Eyebrow true and forehead fair,
And dark, richly-braided hair,
And a queenly head well set,
Crown my maiden Margaret.

Where's the flower that thou canst find
Match for her in form and mind ?

Fair white lilies, having birth
In their native genial earth ; —
These, in scent and queenly grace,
Match thy maiden's form and face !

Now for madcap Isabel —
What shall suit her, pr'y thee tell ?
Isabel is brown and wild ;
Will be evermore a child ;
Is all laughter, all vagary,
Has the spirit of a fairy.
Are you grave ? — The gipsy sly
Turns on you her merry eye,
And you laugh, despite your will.
Isabel is never still,
Always doing, never done,
Be it mischief, work, or fun.
Isabel is short and brown,
Soft to touch as eider-down ;
Tempered, like the balmy south,
With a rosy, laughing mouth ;
Cheeks just tinged with peachy red,
And a graceful Hebe-head ;
Hair put up in some wild way,
Decked with a hedge-rose's spray.

Now where is the bud or bell
That may match with Isabel ?

Streaky tulip jet and gold,
Dearly priced whenever sold ;
Rich in color, low and sweet,
This for Isabel is meet.

Last for Jeanie, grave and mild —
Jeanie never was a child !
Sitting on her mother's knee,
Hers was thoughtful infancy ;
Growing up so meek and good,
Even from her babyhood.
All her mother's labor sharing ;
For the house and children caring ;
To her bed in silence creeping ;
Rising early, little sleeping ;
Learning soon of care and need ;
Learning late to write and read ;
To all hardships reconciled,
For she was a poor man's child !
What's the lowly flower of earth
Match for Jeanie's humble worth ?

Soon poor Jeanie's flower is met, —
The meek, precious violet !

LITTLE STREAMS.

LITTLE streams, in light and shadow
Flowing through the pasture meadow ;
Flowing by the green wayside ;
Through the forest dim and wide ;
Through the hamlet still and small ;
By the cottage ; by the hall ;
By the ruined abbey still ;
Turning, here and there, a mill ;
Bearing tribute to the river ;
Little streams, I love you ever !

Summer music is their flowing ;
Flowering plants in them are growing ;
Happy life is in them all,
Creatures innocent and small ;
Little birds come down to drink
Fearless on their leafy brink ;
Noble trees beside them grow,
Glooming them with branches low,
And between, the sunshine glancing,
In their little waves is dancing.

Little streams have flowers a many,
Beautiful and fair as any ;
Typha strong, and green bur-reed ;
Willow-herb with cotton-seed ;

Arrow-head with eye of jet,
And the water-violet ;
There the flowering rush you meet,
And the plummy meadow-sweet ;
And in places deep and still,
Marble-like, the water-lily.

Little streams, their voices cheery
Sound forth welcomes to the weary,
Flowing on from day to day
Without stint and without stay.
Here, upon their flowery bank,
In the old times Pilgrims drank ;
Here, have seen, as now, pass by
Kingfisher and dragon-fly ;
Those bright things that have their dwelling
Where the little streams are welling.

Down in valleys green and lowly,
Murmuring not and gliding slowly ;
Up in mountain-hollows wild,
Fretting like a peevish child ;
Through the hamlet, where all day
In their waves the children play, —
Running west, or running east,
Doing good to man and beast,
Always giving, weary never,
Little streams, I love you ever !

THE WOLF.

THINK of the lamb in the fields of May,
Cropping the dewy flowers for play ;
Think of the sunshine, warm and clear ;
Of the bending corn in golden ear ;
Of little children singing low
Through flowery meadows as they go ;
Of cooing doves, and the hum of bees
'Mong the lime-trees' yellow racimes ;
Of the pebbly waters gliding by,
Of the woodbird's peaceful sylvan cry,
Then turn thy thought to a land of snow
Where the cutting icy wind doth blow —
A dreary land of mountains cold,
With ice-crag splintered hoar and old,
Jagged with woods of storm-peat pines,
Where a cold moon gleams, a cold sun shines !
And all through this dismal land we'll go
In a dog-drawn sledge o'er the frozen snow,
On either hand the ice-rocks froze,
And a waste of trackless snow before !
Where are the men to guide us on ?
Men ! in these deserts there are none.
Men come not here, unless to track
The ermine white or marten black.

Here we must speed alone. — But hark !
What sound was that ? The wild wolf's bark !
The terrible wolf ! — Is he anigh,
With his gaunt, lean frame and blood-shot eye ?
Yes ! — across the snow I saw the track
Where they have sped on, a hungry pack ;
And see how the eager dogs rush on,
For they scent the track where the wolf has gone.
And beast and man are alike afraid
Of that cruelest creature that e'er was made !
Oh, the horrible wolves ! methinks I hear
The sound of their barking drawing near ;
Down from their dismal caves they drive,
And leave behind them nought alive ;
Down from their caves they come by day,
Savage as mad-dogs for their prey ;
Down on the tracks where the hunters roam,
Down to the peasant's hut they come.
The peasant is waked from his pine-branch bed
By the direst, fiercest sound of dread ;
A snuffing scent, a scratching sound,
Like a dog that rendeth up the ground ;
Up from his bed he springs in fear,
For he knows that the cruel wolf is near.
A moment's pause — a moment more —
And he hears them snuffing 'neath his door.
Beneath his door he sees them mining,
Snuffing, snarling, scratching, whining.

Horrible sight ! no more he sees,
With terror his very senses freeze ; —
Horrible sounds ! he hears no more,
The wild wolves bound across his floor,
And the next moment lap his gore ;
And ere the day come o'er the hill,
The wolves are gone, the place is still,
And to none that dreadful death is known,
Save to some ermine hunter lone,
Who in that death foresees his own !

Or think thee now of a battle-field,
Where lie the wounded with the killed ;
Hundreds of mangled men they lie ;
A horrible mass of agony !
The night comes down, — and in they bound,
The ravening wolves from the mountains round.
All day long have they come from far,
Snuffing that bloody field of war ;
But the rolling drum, and the trumpet's bray,
And the strife of men through the livelong day,
For a while kept the prowling wolves away ;
But now when the roaring tumults cease,
In that dreadful hush, which is not peace,
The wolves rush in to have their will,
And to lap of living blood their fill.
Stark and stiff the dead men lie,
But the living, — Oh, wo, to hear their cry,

When they feel the teeth of those cruel foes,
And hear them lap up the blood that flows !
Oh, shame, that ever it hath been said,
That bloody war is a glorious trade,
And that soldiers die upon honor's bed !
Let us hence, let us hence, for horrible war
Than the merciless wolf is more merciless far !

THE PASSION FLOWER.

I LOVE sweet flowers of every sort,
High-spired or trailing low;
I love the musky roses red,
The lilies white as snow.

The aster and the columbine,
Sweet-pea and virgin-bower,
I love them all — but most I love
The good old passion-flower !

Oh yes, the good old passion-flower !
It bringeth to my mind,
The young days of the Christian church,
Dim ages left behind.

I see the bloody streets of Rome ;
The throng — the burning pyre,
And Christians stand with clasped hands
Amid the raging fire.

I hear the women, angel-toned,
The men with courage high,
Preach their dear Lord amid their pangs, —
Forgive their foes — and die.

I see, far from the world apart,
In desert-places dwell,
The early fathers of the church,
In wood or mountain-cell.

And there the wondering thousands come,
By love and pity brought,
To hear them tell of Jesus Christ,
And the new truths he taught.

I see the fearless fathers stand,
Amid the eager throng,
Preaching like Paul at Ephesus,
In burning words and strong.

Again I see a lonely man,
Of spirit sad and mild,
Who hath his little dwelling-place
Amid a region wild.

The wild flowers of the desert
Grow round him thick as weeds,
And, in their beautiful array,
Of holy things he reads.

The red is the dear blood of Christ,
The white, the pure from sin,
The yellow is the seamless robe
Christ was appareled in.

All four-leaved flowers bring to his mind
The cross whereon he died ;
And every thorn the cruel spear,
That pierced his blessed side.

I see him as he mused one day
Beneath a forest bower,
With clasped hands stand, and upturned eyes,
Before an open flower ;
Exclaiming with a fervent joy,
“ I have found the Passion-flower !

“ The Passion of our blessed Lord,
With all his pangs and pain,
Set forth within a little flower,
In shape and color plain !

“ Behold the ladder and the cord
With which his limbs were tied ;
Behold his five deep, cruel wounds
In hands, and feet, and side !

“ Behold the hammer and the nails ;
The bloody crown of thorn ;
And these his precious tears, when left
Of God and man forlorn !

“ Up, I will forth into the world,
And take this flower with me,

To preach the death of Christ to all,
As it has preached to me ! ”

And thus the good old passion-flower
Throughout the world was sent,
To breathe into all Christian hearts
Its holy sentiment.

And in the after-times, when kings
Of Christian fathers came ;
And to profess the faith of Christ
No longer purchased shame :

When abbeys rose in towered state
And over wood and dell,
Went sounding, with a royal voice,
The stately minster-bell :

Then was the abbey-garden made
All with the nicest care ;
Its little borders quaintly cut
In fancies rich and rare.

And there they brought all curious plants,
With sainted names, a flower
For every saint's day of the year,—
For every holy hour ;
And there was set, in pride of place,
The noble passion-flower.

And there they kept, the pious monks,
Within a garden small,
All plants that had a healing power,
All herbs medicinal.

And thither came the sick, the maimed,
The moonstruck and the blind,
For holy flower, for wort of power,
For charmed root and rind !

Oh, those old abbey-gardens,
With their devices rich,
Their fountains, and green, solemn walks,
And saint in many a niche !

I would I could call back again
Those gardens in their pride,
And see slow walking up and down
The abbot dignified.

And the fat monk with sleepy eyes,
Half dozing in his cell ;
And him, the poor lay-brother,
That loved the flowers so well ;

That laid the abbey-gardens out,
With all their fancies quaint,
And loved a little flower as much
As his own patron saint !

That gardened late and early,
And twined into a bower,
Wherein he set the crucifix,
The good old passion-flower !

Oh, would I could bring back again
Those abbey-gardens old,
And see the poor lay-brother
So busy in the mould ;

Tying up his flowers and thinking
The while, with streaming eyes,
Of Jesus in the garden,
Of Eve in Paradise !

Alas, the abbey lieth low ;
The abbot's tomb is bare ;
And he, the abbey-gardener,
Is all forgotten there ;

His garden is a pasture-field
Wherein the flocks repose ;
And where his choicest flowers were set
The common clover grows !

But still we have the passion-flower,
Although he lieth low,
And ever may its holy flowers
In pleasant gardens grow !

To garland bower and window pane,
And ever bring to mind
The young days of the Christian church,
Long ages left behind !

To bring the abbey's garden back,
With its quaint beds and bowers,
And him the good lay-brother
That worked among the flowers.



THE REINDEER.

REINDEER, not in fields like ours,
Full of grass and bright with flowers ;
Not in pasture-dales where glide
Never-frozen rivers wide ;
Not on hills where verdure bright
Clothes them to the topmost height
Hast thou dwelling ; nor dost thou
Feed beneath the orange-bough ;
Nor doth olive, nor doth vine
Bud or bloom in land of thine ;
Thou wast made to fend and fare
In a region bleak and bare ;
In a dreary land of snow
Where green weeds can scarcely grow !
Where the skies are grey and drear ;
Where 't is night for half the year ;
Reindeer, where, unless for thee,
Human dweller could not be.

When thou wast at first designed
By the great Creative Mind —
With thy patience and thy speed ;
With thy aid for human need ;

With thy gentleness ; thy might ;
With thy simple appetite ;
With thy foot so framed to go
Over frozen wastes of show,
Thou wast made for sterner skies
Than horizoned Paradise.
Thou for frozen lands wast meant,
Ere the winter's frost was sent ;
And in love he sped thee forth
To thy home, the frozen north,
Where he bade the rocks produce
Bitter lichens for thy use.

What the camel is, thou art,
Strong of frame, and strong in heart !
Peaceful ; stedfast to fulfill ;
Serving man with right good-will ;
Serving long, and serving hard ;
Asking but a scant reward ;
Of the snow a short repast,
Or the mosses cropped in haste ;
Then away ! with all thy strength,
Speeding him the country's length,
Speeding onward, like the wind,
With the sliding sledge behind.
What the camel is, thou art —
Doing well thy needful part ;
Through the burning sand he goes,
Thou upon the upland snows ;

Gifted each alike, yet meant
For lands and labors different !

Meek Reindeer, of wondrous worth ;
Treasure of the desert north,
Which, of thy good aid bereft,
Ten times desert must be left !
Flocks and herds in other lands,
And the labor of men's hands ;
Coined gold and silver fine,
And the riches of the mine,
These, elsewhere, as wealth are known,
Here, 't is thou art wealth alone !

THE IVY-BUSH.

FAR in the woods of Winter-burn,
Beyond the slopes of feathery fern ;
Beyond the lake, and beyond the fen,
Down in a wild and sylvan glen,
In the very heart of Winter-burn wood ;
Last summer an ivy-bush there stood,
As strong as an oak, as thick as a yew,
This ivy-bush in the forest grew :
Let us go down this day and see
If in Winter-burn still grows this tree.

Now we are here, — the words I spoke
Were not, ye see, an idle joke !
Stem, branch, and root, what think ye all
Of this ivy-bush, so broad and tall ?
Many and many a year, I wis,
The tree has throve ere it grew to this !
Many a year has tried its speed,
Since this old bush was an ivy-seed ;
And the woodman's children that were then,
Long years ago were ancient men,

And now no more on earth are seen ;
But the ivy-bush is hale and green,
And ere it sinks in slow decay,
Many years to come will have passed away.

All round about 'mong its twisting boughs
There's many an owl doth snugly house,
Warm feathered o'er, yet none can see
How they winking sit in the ivy-tree,
For the leaves are thick as they can be.
But at fall of night, when the stars come out,
The old owls begin to move about ;
And the ivy bush, like a busy hive,
Within its leaves is all alive ;
And were you here you would declare,
That the very bush began to stare,
For in the dusk of leaves dark-green,
The owl-eyes look out fixed and keen ;
North and south, and round about,
East and west the eyes look out.
And anon is heard afar and nigh
How the ivy-bush sends forth a cry,
A cry so long, a cry so wild,
That it wakes, almost, the cradled child ;
And the coach that comes with its peopled load,
Man, woman and babe, up the hilly road,
They hear in amaze the sudden hoot
That shakes the old bush, branch and root,

And the caped-up coachman, then says he,
"In Winter-burn there grows a tree,
And in this tree more owls abide
Than in all Winter-burn beside ;
And every night as we climb this brow,
The owls hoot out as they 're hooting now !"
And when they hoot and when they shout,
'T is wo to the wood-mice all about,
And when the fires of their eyes appear,
The weak little birds they quake for fear,
For they know that the owls, with a fierce delight
Riot and feast, like lords, at night.

Oh bush, of ivy-trees the prime,
Men find thee out at winter time,
From the distant town through frost and snow
To the woods of Winter-burn they go ;
And if care were killed by an ivy-bough,
What a killer of care, old tree, wert thou !
And high in the hall, with laughter merry,
They hang thy twigs with their powdered berry ;
And the red-gemmed holly they mix also,
With the spectral branches of the misseltoe.
Rare old tree ! and the cottage small
Is decked as well as the baron's hall,
For the children's hands are busy and fain
To dress up the little window-pane,

And set in the chinks of the roof-tree wood
The holly and ivy, green and good.

'T were well for us, thou rare old tree,
Could we gladden the human heart like thee ;
Like thee and the holly, that thus make gay
The lowliest cot for a winter's day !

MORNING THOUGHTS.

THE summer sun is shining
Upon a world so bright !
The dew upon each grassy blade ;
The golden light, the depth of shade,
All seem as they were only made
To minister delight.

From giant trees, strong branched,
And all their veined leaves ;
From little birds that madly sing ;
From insects fluttering on the wing ;
Ay, from the very meanest thing,
My spirit joy receives.

I think of angel voices
When the birds' songs I hear ;
Of that celestial city, bright
With jacinth, gold and chrysolite,
When, with its blazing pomp of light,
The morning doth appear !

I think of that great River
That from the Throne flows free ;
Of weary pilgrims on its brink,
Who, thirsting, have come down to drink ;
Of that unfailing Stream I think,
When earthly streams I see !

I think of pain and dying,
As that which is but nought,
When glorious morning, warm and bright,
With all its voices of delight,
From the chill darkness of the night,
Like a new life, is brought.

I think of human sorrow
But as of clouds that brood
Upon the bosom of the day,
And the next moment pass away ;
And with a trusting heart I say
Thank God, *all things are good !*

THE PHEASANT.

THE stock-dove builds in the old oak wood,
The rook in the elm-tree rears his brood ;
The owl in a ruin doth hoot and stare ;
The mavis and merle build everywhere ;
But not for these will we go to-day,
'Tis the pheasant that lures us hence away ;
The beautiful pheasant that loves to be
Where the young green birches are waving free.

Away to the woods with the silvery rind,
And the emerald tresses afloat on the wind !
For 'tis joy to go to those sylvan bowers
When summer is rich with leaves and flowers ;
And to see, 'mid the growth of all lovely things,
The joyous pheasant unfold his wings,
And then cower down, as if to screen
His gorgeous purple, gold, and green !

The streams run on in music low,
'T will be joy by their flowery banks to go ;
'T will be joy to come to the calamus beds,
Where a broken root such odor sheds ;

And to see how the water-sedge uplifts
Its spires and crowns — the summer's gifts ;
To see the loosestrife's purple spear,
And the wind through the waving reeds to hear.

Then on through hazelly lanes, away
To the light-green fields all clear of hay,
Where along the thick hedge-side we greet,
'Tall purple vetch and meadow-sweet ;
Past old farm-house and water-mill,
Where the great colt's-foot grows wild at will ;
Where the water-rat swims calm and cool,
And pike bask in the deep mill-pool.

So on and away to the mossy moor,
Stretching on for many a mile before,
A far-seen wild, where all around
Some rare and beautiful thing is found ;
Green mosses many, and sundew red,
And the cotton-rush with its plummy head ;
The spicy sweet-gale loved so well,
And golden wastes of the asphodel !

Yet on and on, o'er the springy moss, —
We have yet the bog-rush bed to cross ;
And then anigh, all shimmering green
To the sunny breeze, are the birch-woods seen, —
Than the green birch-wood a lovelier spot
In the realms of fairy-land was not !

And the pheasant is there all life, all grace,
The lord of this verdurous dwelling-place.

Oh, beautiful bird, in thy stately pride,
Thou wast made in a waste of flowers to hide,
And to fling to the sun the glorious hues
Of thy rainbow gold, thy greens and blues !
Yes, beautiful pheasant, the birch-wood bowers,
Rich many-formed leaves, bright-tinted flowers,
Broad masses of shade, and the sunshine free,
In thy gorgeous beauty are meet for thee !



HARVEST-FIELD FLOWERS.

Come down into the harvest-fields,
 This autumn morn, with me,
For in the pleasant autumn-fields
 There's much to hear and see.
On yellow slopes of waving corn
 The autumn sun shines clearly ;
And 't is joy to walk, on days like this,
 Among the bearded barley.

Within the sunny harvest-fields
 We'll gather flowers enow ;
The poppy red, the marigold,
 The buglos brightly blue ;
We'll gather the white convolvulus
 That opes in the morning early ;
With a cluster of nuts, an ear of wheat,
 And an ear of the bearded barley.

Bright over the golden fields of corn
 Doth shine the autumn sky ;
So let's be merry while we may,
 For time goes hurrying by.

They took down the sickle from the wall
When morning dews shone pearly ;
And the mower whets the ringing scythe
To cut the bearded barley.

Come then into the harvest-fields ;
The robin sings his song ;
The corn stands yellow on the hills,
And autumn stays not long.
They 'll carry the sheaves of corn away ;
They carried to-day so early,
Along the lanes, with a rustling sound,
Their loads of the bearded barley !



THE SEA-GULL.

Oh the white sea-gull, the wild sea-gull,
A joyful bird is he,
As he lies like a cradled thing at rest
In the arms of the sunny sea !
The little waves rock to and fro,
And the white gull lies asleep,
As the fisher's bark, with breeze and tide,
Goes merrily over the deep.
The ship, with her fair sails set, goes by,
And her people stand to note
How the sea-gull sits on the rocking waves
As still as an anchored boat.
The sea is fresh, the sea is fair,
And the sky calm overhead,
And the sea-gull lies on the deep, deep sea,
Like a king in his royal bed !

Oh the white sea-gull, the bold sea-gull,
A joyful bird is he,
Sitting, like a king, in calm repose
On the breast of the heaving sea !
The waves leap up, the wild wind blows,

And the gulls together crowd,
And wheel about, and madly scream
To the sea that is roaring loud ; —
And let the sea roar ever so loud,
And the winds pipe ever so high,
With a wilder joy the bold sea-gull
Sendeth forth a wilder cry, —
For the sea-gull he is a daring bird,
And he loves with the storm to sail,
To ride in the strength of the billowy sea,
And to breast the driving gale !
The little boat she is tossed about,
Like a sea-weed, to and fro :
The tall ship reels like a drunken man,
As the gusty tempests blow.
But the sea-gull laughs at the pride of man,
And sails in a wild delight
On the torn-up breast of the night-black sea,
Like a foam-cloud, calm and white.
The waves may rage and the winds may roar,
But he fears not wreck nor need,
For he rides the sea, in its stormy strength,
As a strong man rides his steed !

Oh the white sea-gull, the bold sea-gull,
He makes on the shore his nest,
And he tries what the inland fields may be ;
But he loveth the sea the best !

And away from land, a thousand leagues
 He goes 'mid surging foam ;
What matter to him is land or shore,
 For the sea is his truest home !
And away to the north 'mong ice-rocks stern,
 And among the frozen snow,
To a sea that is lone and desolate,
 Will the wanton sea-gull go.
For he careth not for the winter wild,
 Nor those desert regions chill ;
In the midst of the cold, as on calm, blue seas,
 The sea-gull hath his will !
And the dead whale lies on the northern shores,
 And the seal, and the sea-horse grim,
And the death of the great sea-creatures makes
 A full, merry feast for him !

Oh the wild sea-gull, the bold sea-gull !
 As he screams in his wheeling flight ;
As he sits on the waves in storm or calm ;
 All cometh to him aright !
All cometh to him as he liketh best ;
 Nor any his will gainsay ;
And he rides on the waves like a bold, young king,
 That was crowned but yesterday !

The Gull, notwithstanding the gormandizing and rather disgusting character given of it by Bewick, figures beautifully in his inimitable wood-cuts, giving the very spirit of wildness and freshness to his sea-side sketches.

The gull may occasionally be found far inland, domesticated in old-fashioned gardens, where it is an indulged and amusing habitant, feeding on slugs and worms, and becoming thus a useful assistant to the gardener. In this state it seems entirely to throw off its wild, native character, and assumes a sort of mock-heroic style, which is often quite ludicrous. We have seen one strutting about the straight alleys of such a garden, with the most formal, yet conscious air imaginable, glancing first to one side then to the other, evidently aware of your notice, yet pretending to be busied about his own concerns. It was impossible to conceive that this bird, walking "in his dignified way," upon his two stiff little legs, and so full of self-importance, had ever been a free, wild, winged creature, wheeling about and screaming in the storm, or riding gracefully upon the sunshiny waters. His nature had undergone a land-change; he was transformed into the patron of poodles, and the condescending companion of an old black cat. With these creatures, belonging to the same place, he was on very friendly terms, maintaining, nevertheless, an air of supe-

rriority over them, which they permitted, either out of pure good-nature, or because their simplicity was imposed upon. They were all frequently fed from the same plate, but the quadrupeds never presumed to put in their noses until the gull was satisfied, and to his credit it may be told, that he was not insatiable, although a reasonably voracious bird on ordinary occasions.

We saw last summer, also, a gull well known to northern tourists, which for twenty years has inhabited one of the inner green-courts at Alnwick Castle, and has outlived two or three companions. It is an interesting bird, of a venerable appearance; but, as it has been described in books, more need not be said of it.

In one of the towers of this same castle, also, we were shown a pair of perfect bird-skeletons, under a glass shade, the history of which is mysterious. They are the skeletons of a pair of jackdaws, which had built in one of the upper towers of the castle, and had been found in their present state, apparently nestled together. From the account given us by the porter, an intelligent old man, they appeared not to have been discovered in any confined place where they might have died from starvation, but by their own tower on the open roof, as if they had been death-stricken side by side.

SUMMER WOODS.

COME ye into the summer woods ;
There entereth no annoy ;
All greenly wave the chestnut leaves,
And the earth is full of joy.

I cannot tell you half the sights
Of beauty you may see,
The bursts of golden sunshine,
And many a shady tree.

There, lightly swung, in bowery glades.
The honeysuckles twine ;
There blooms the rose-red campion,
And the dark-blue columbine.

There grows the four-leaved plant "true-love,"
In some dusk woodland spot ;
There grows the enchanter's night-shade,
And the wood forget-me-not.

And many a merry bird is there,
Unscared by lawless men ;
The blue-winged jay, the wood-pecker,
And the golden-crested wren.

Come down, and ye shall see them all,
The timid and the bold ;
For their sweet life of pleasantness,
It is not to be told.

And far within that summer-wood,
Among the leaves so green,
There flows a little gurgling brook,
The brightest e'er was seen.

There come the little gentle birds,
Without a fear of ill ;
Down to the murmuring water's edge
And freely drink their fill !

And dash about and splash about,
The merry little things ;
And look askance with bright black eyes,
And flirt their dripping wings.

I've seen the freakish squirrels drop
Down from their leafy tree,
The little squirrels with the old, —
Great joy it was to me !

And down unto the running brook,
I've seen them nimbly go ;
And the bright water seemed to speak
A welcome kind and low.

The nodding plants they bow their heads,
As if, in heartsome cheer,
They spake unto those little things,
" 'Tis merry living here ! "

Oh, how my heart ran o'er with joy !
I saw that all was good,
And how we might glean up delight
All round us, if we would !

And many a wood-mouse dwelleth there,
Beneath the old wood-shade,
And all day long has work to do,
Nor is of aught afraid.

The green shoots grow above their heads,
And roots so fresh and fine
Beneath their feet, nor is there strife
'Mong them for *mine and thine*.

There is enough for every one,
And they lovingly agree ;
We might learn a lesson, all of us,
Beneath the green-wood tree !

THE MANDRAKE.

THERE once was a garden grand and old,
Its stately walks were trodden by few ;
And there, in its driest and deepest mould,
The dark-green, poisonous mandrake grew.

That garden's lord was a learned man, —
It is of an ancient time we tell, —
He was grim and stern, with a visage wan,
And had books which only he could spell.

He had been a monk in his younger days,
They said, and traveled by land and sea,
And now, in his old, ancestral place,
He was come to study in privacy.

A garden it was both large and lone,
And in it was temple, cave, and mound :
The trees were with ivy overgrown,
And the depth of its lake no line had found.

Some said that the springs of the lake lay deep
Under the fierce volcano's root ;
For the water would oft-times curl and leap,
When the summer air was calm and mute.

And all along o'er its margin dank
Hung massy branches of evergreen ;
And among the pebbles upon the bank
The playful water-snakes were seen.

And yew-trees old, in the alleys dim,
Were cut into dragon-shapes of dread ;
And in the midst of shadow, grotesque and grim,
Stood goat-limbed statues of sullen lead.

The garden-beds they were long, and all
With a tangle of flowers were overgrown ;
And each was screened with an ancient wall,
Or parapet low of mossy stone.

And from every crevice and broken ledge
The harebell blue and the wall-flower sprung ;
And from the wall to the water's edge,
Wild masses of tendrilled creepers hung ;

For there was a moat outside, where slept
Deep waters with slimy moss grown o'er,
And a wall and a tower securely kept
By a ban-dog fierce at a grated door.

This garden's lord was a scholar wise,
A scholar wise, with a learned look ;
He studied by night the starry skies,
And all day long some ancient book.

There were lords hard by who lived by spoil,
But he did the men of war eschew ;
There were lowly serfs who tilled the soil,
But with toiling serfs he had nought to do.

But now and then might with him be seen,
Two other old men with look profound,
Who peered 'mong the leaves of the mandrake green
And lightened with care the soil around.

For the king was sick and of help had need ;
Or he had a foe whom art must quell,
So he sent to the learned man with speed
To gather for him a mandrake spell.

And at night when the moon was at the full,
When the air was still and the stars were out,
Came the three the mandrake root to pull,
With the help of the ban-dog fierce and stout.

Oh, the mandrake root ! and they listened all three,
For awful sounds, and they spoke no word,
And when the owl screeched from the hollow tree,
They said, 'twas the mandrake's groan they heard.

And words they muttered, but what none knew,
With motion slow of hand and foot :
Then into the cave the three withdrew,
And carried with them the mandrake root.

They all were scholars of high degree,
So they took the root of the mandrake fell,
And cut it and carved it hideously,
And muttered it into a charmed spell.

Then who had been there, by dawn of day,
Might have seen the two from the grated door
Speed forth ; and as sure as they went away,
The charmed mandrake root they bore.

And the old lord up in his chamber sat,
Blessing himself, sedate and mute,
That he thus could gift the wise and great
With more than gold — the mandrake root.

The reverence attached to the mandrake may be classed among the very oldest of superstitions, for the Hebrews of the patriarchal ages regarded it as a plant of potent influence. The Greeks, who held it in the same estimation, called it after Circe, their celebrated witch, and also after Atropos, the eldest of the three Fates. The Romans adopted the same opinions respecting it, and Pliny relates the ceremonies which were used in obtaining the root.

In the middle ages, when the traditional superstitions of the ancients were grafted upon the pop-

ular ignorance, the mandrake was a powerful engine in the hands of the crafty.

It was believed that when the mandrake was taken from the earth, it uttered a dreadful shriek; and that any human being who was presumptuous enough to remove it, was suddenly struck dead. Dogs, therefore, were used for this purpose. The earth was carefully lightened, and the plant fastened to the animal's tail; he was then made to draw it forth, and pay whatever penalty the demon of the plant thought fit to impose upon the disturber of his rest. The pretenders to medical skill in those days made great profit by the little hideous images which they fashioned out of the mandrake root, and sold as charms against every kind of sickness and misfortune. They were brought over from Germany in the reign of Henry the eighth, under the name of *Abrunes*, and by the help of certain pretended magical words, the knowledge of which the credulous obtained at a great price, were said to increase whatever money was placed near them. It was believed, also, at that time, that the mandrake was produced from the decaying flesh of malefactors hung upon the gibbet, and was to be found only in such situations. Dr. Turner, who lived in the time of queen Elizabeth, declares that he had divers times taken up the roots of the mandrake, but had never found them under the gallows; nor of the form which the pedlars, who sold them

in boxes, pretended them to have been. This form was that of an ugly little man, with a long beard hanging down to his feet. Gerard, the herbalist, also, who wrote thirty years later, used many endeavors to convince the world of the impositions practiced upon them, and states that he and his servant frequently dug up the roots without receiving harm, or hearing any shrieks whatever.

The mandrake grows naturally in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the Levant, and it is also indigenous to China. It was introduced into this country about 1564. It is a handsome plant, and would, in particular situations, be ornamental to our gardens, independent of the strange, old associations connected with it, which would always make it an interesting object. I have seen it, however, only in one garden, that of the king of the Belgians, at Claremont.

"It is," says Mr. Phillips, in his pleasant garden companion, the *Flora Historica*, from which work the above historical notices of the mandrake have been principally taken, "a species of deadly nightshade, which grows with a long taper root like the parsnep, running three or four feet deep; these roots are frequently forked, which assisted to enable the old quacks to give it the shape of a monster. This plant does not send up a stalk, but, immediately from the crown of the root arises a circle of leaves, which at first stand erect, but

when grown to their full size, which is about a foot in length and five inches broad, of an ovate-lanceolate shape, waved at the edges, these spread open and lie on the ground; they are of a dark-green, and give out a fetid smell. About the month of April the flowers come out among the leaves, each on a scape about three inches long; they are of a bell-shape, with a long tube, and spread out into a five-cleft corolla. The color of the flower is of an herbaceous white, but frequently has a tinge of purple. The flower is succeeded by a globular soft berry, when full grown as large as a common cherry, but of a yellowish-green color when ripe, and full of pulp intermixed with numerous reniform seeds."

If any of my readers should wish to cultivate this plant of "old renown," they should do it by sowing the seed in autumn, soon after it is ripe; as the seed kept until spring seldom produces plants. It should be set in light, dry soil, and of a good depth, so that the root may not be chilled or obstructed; and care should be taken not to disturb it when it has once obtained a considerable size.

THE HEDGE-HOG.

THOU poor little English porcupine,
What a harrassed and weary life is thine !
And thou art a creature meek and mild,
That wouldst not harm a sleeping child.

Thou scarce canst stir from thy tree-root
But thy foes are up in hot pursuit ;
Thou might'st be an asp, or horned snake,
Thou poor little martyr of the brake !

Thou scarce canst put out that nose of thine ;
Thou canst not shew a single spine,
But the urchin-rabble are in a rout,
With terrier curs to hunt thee out.

The poor hedgehog ! one would think he knew
His foes so many, his friends so few,
For when he comes out he's in a fright,
And hurries again to be out of sight.

How unkind the world must seem to him,
Living under the thicket dusk and dim,
And getting his living among the roots,
Of the insects small, and dry hedge-fruits.

How hard it must be, to be kicked about,
If by chance his prickly back peep out ;
To be all his days misunderstood,
When he could not harm us if he would !

He 's an innocent thing, living under the blame
That he merits not, of an evil name ;
He is weak and small, — and all he needs
Lies under the hedge among the weeds.

He robs not man of rest nor food,
And all that he asks is quietude ;
To be left by him, as a worthless stone,
Under the dry hedge-bank alone !

Oh, poor little English porcupine,
What a troubled and weary life is thine !
I would that my pity thy foes could quell,
For thou art ill-used, and meanest well !

THE CUCKOO.

"PEE! pee! pee!" says the merry Pee-bird;
And as soon as the children hear it,
"The Cuckoo's a-coming," they say, "for I heard,
Up in his tree, the merry pee-bird,
And he'll come in three days, or near it."
The days go on, one, two, three;
And the little bird singeth "pee! pee! pee!"
Then on the morrow, 'tis very true,
They hear the note of the old cuckoo;
Up in the elm tree, through the day,
Just as in gone years, shouting away;
"Cuckoo!" the cuckoo doth cry,
And the little boys mock him as they go by.

The wood-pecker laughs to hear the strain,
And says "the old fellow is come back again;
He sitteth again on the very same tree,
And talks of himself again — he! he! he!"
The stock-doves together begin to coo
When they hear the voice of the old cuckoo;
"Ho! ho!" say they, "he did not find
Those far away countries quite to his mind,
So he's come again to see what he can do
With sucking the small birds' eggs, coo-coo!"

The black-bird, and throstle, and loud missel-cock,
They sing all together, the cuckoo to mock :
“ What want we with him ? let him stay over sea ! ”
Sings the bold piping reed-sparrow, “ want him ? not
we ! ”

“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo shouts still,
“ I care not for you, let you rave as you will ! ”
“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo doth cry,
And the little boys mock him as they go by.

“ Hark ! hark ! ” sings the chiff-chaff, “ hark ! hark ! ”
sings the lark,
And the white-throats and buntings all twitter “ hark !
hark ! ”

The wren and the hedge-sparrow hear it anon,
And “ hark ! hark ! ” in a moment shouts every one.
“ Hark ! hark ! — that ’s the cuckoo there, shouting
amain,

Bless our lives ! why, that egg-sucker ’s come back
again ! ”

“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo shouts still,
“ I shall taste of your eggs, let you rave as you
will ! ”

“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo doth cry,
And the little boys mock him as they go by.

The water-hens hear it, the rail and the smew,
And they say, “ Why, on land there ’s a pretty to-do !
Sure the cuckoo ’s come back, what else can be the
matter ? ”

The pyes and the jays are all making a clatter ! ”

“ Hark ! hark ! ” says the woodcock, “ I hear him myself,

Shouting up in the elm-tree, the comical elf ! ”

“ Hark ! hark ! ” cries the widgeon, “ and I hear him too,

Shouting loudly as ever, that self-same cuckoo.”

“ Well, well,” says the wild duck, “ what is it to us ;
I’ve no spite ’gainst the cuckoo, why make such a
fuss ?

Let him shout as he listeth — he comes over sea —
And his French may be French, ’t is no matter to me.
I have no spite against him, my soul’s not so narrow,
I leave all such whims to the tomtit and sparrow ! ”

“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo shouts still,

“ You may all hold your peace, I shall do as I
will.”

“ Cuckoo ! ” the cuckoo doth cry,

And the little boys mock him as they go by.



THE HORNET.

So, there at last I've found you, my famous old fellow !
Ay, and mighty grand besides, in your suit of red
and yellow !

I have often heard talk of you, but ne'er saw you
before ;

And there you're standing sentinel at the hornet-
castle door !

Well, what a size you are ! just like a great wasp-
king !

What a solemn buzz you make, now you're upon the
wing !

My word ! I do not wonder that people fear your
sting !

So — so — Don't be so angry ! Why do you come
at me

With a swoop and with a hum ? — Is't a crime to
look at ye ?

See where the testy fellow goes whiz into the hole,
And brings out from the hollow tree his fellows in a
shoal.

Hark ! what an awful, hollow boom ! How fierce
they come ! I'd rather

Just quietly step back, and stand from them a little
farther.

There, now, the hornet-host is retreating to its den,
And so, good Mr. Sentinel — lo! here I am again.
Well — how the little angry wretch doth stamp and
raise his head,
And flit his wings, and seem to say, “Come here —
I’ll sting you dead!”
No, thank you, fierce Sir Hornet, — that’s not at all
inviting;
But what a pair of shears the rascal has for biting!
What a pair of monstrous shears to carry at his
head!
If wasp or fly come in their gripe, that moment they
are dead.
There — bite in two the whip-lash, as we poke it at
your chin!
See, how he bites! but it is tough, and again he
hurries in.
Ho, ho! we soon shall have the whole of his vindic-
tive race,
With a hurry and a scurry, all flying in our face.
To potter in a hornet’s nest, is a proverb old and
good,
So it’s just as well to take the hint, and retreat into
the wood.
O, here behind this hazel-bush we safely may look
out,
And see what all the colony of hornets is about.
Why, what a furious troop it is — how fierce they
seem to be,

As they fly, now in the sunshine, now in shadow of
the tree !
And yet they 're noble insects ! their bodies red and
yellow,
And large almost as little birds, how richly-toned and
mellow.
And these old woods, so full of trees, all hollow and
decayed,
Must be a perfect paradise for the hornet legions
made,
Secure from village lads, and from gardeners' watch-
ful eyes,
They may build their paper-nests, and issue for
supplies
To orchards or to gardens, for plum, and peach, and
pear, —
With wasp, fly, ant, and earwig, they 'll have a giant's
share.
And you, stout Mr. Sentinel, there standing at the
door,
Though Homer said in his time, " the hornet's soul
all o'er," —
You're not so *very* spiritual, but soon some sunny
morning
I may find you in a green-gage, and give you little
warning,
Or feeding in a Windsor pear ; or at the juicy stalk
Of my negro-boy, grand dahlia, — too heavy much
to walk ;

Ay, very much too heavy, — that juicy stem deceives,
“Makes faint with too much sweet such heavy-winged
thieves.”

Too heavy much to walk, — then, pray how can
you fly ?

No, there you 'll drop upon the ground, and there
you 're doomed to die !

The Hornet is an insect that every one has heard of, because the fearful effects of its sting and its fierceness are proverbial ; but it is by no means common in many parts of the country. In the midland counties hornets are often talked of, but rarely seen. We have lived in several of the midland counties, and seen a good deal of them, but never saw a hornet there. Since coming to reside in Surrey, we have found plenty of them. They come buzzing into the house, and are almost as common in the garden as wasps, themselves, devouring the fruits before-mentioned, and also as voracious of the green, tender bark of the dahlia, as ants are of the juice of the yucca. They peel the young branches with their nippers or shears as a rabbit peels a young tree ; and wasps, and the great blue-bottle and other flies, follow in their train and suck its juice greedily. In common, too, with the wasps, which by their side appear very diminutive insects, they gorge

themselves so with the pulp of fruit as to drop heavily on the earth on being suddenly disturbed, and are then easily destroyed. They frequently make their nests in the thatch of cottages and out-buildings, where it is difficult to destroy them, as in such situations neither fire, sulphur, nor gunpowder can be used, and producing large swarms there, they are dangerous and devouring neighbors.

On Bookham Common, — a pleasant wide tract, overgrown with trees, principally oaks, and resembling a forest, with its fern and green turfy glades, much more than a common, — we found two nests within a few yards of each other, in two hollow trees, where the sentinel, and indeed the whole swarms, behaved themselves as before represented.

Whether three of these insects are sufficient to kill a horse, as the old country-saying avers, is doubtful; but, from their size, the irritability of their nature, and the appearance of their stings, they are very formidable creatures indeed.

THE USE OF FLOWERS.

God might have bade the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak-tree and the cedar-tree,
Without a flower at all.

We might have had enough, enough
For every want of ours,
For luxury, medicine, and toil,
And yet have had no flowers.

The ore within the mountain mine
Requireth none to grow ;
Nor doth it need the lotus-flower
To make the river flow.

The clouds might give abundant rain ;
The nightly dews might fall,
And the herb that keepeth life in man,
Might yet have drunk them all.

Then wherefore, wherefore were they made,
All dyed with rainbow light,
All fashioned with supremest grace
Upspringing day and night : —

Springing in valleys green and low,
And on the mountains high,
And in the silent wilderness
Where no man passes by ?

Our outward life requires them not —
Then wherefore had they birth ? —
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth ;

To comfort man — to whisper hope,
Whene'er his faith is dim,
For who so careth for the flowers
Will much more care for him !

THE CARRION CROW.

On a splintered bough sits the Carrion Crow,
And first he croaks loud and then he croaks low ;
Twenties of years ago, that bough
Was leafless and barkless as it is now.

It is on the top of an ancient oak
That the Carrion Crow has perched to croak ;
In the gloom of a forest the old oak grows, —
When it was young there's nobody knows.

'T is but half alive, — and up in the air
You may see its branches splintered and bare ;
You may see them plain in the cloudy night,
They are so skeleton-like and white.

The old oak trunk is gnarled and gray,
But the wood has rotted all away,
Nothing remains but a cave-like shell,
Where bats, and spiders, and millepedes dwell ;

And the tawny owl and the noisy daw,
In many a hollow and many a flaw ;
By night or by day, were you there about,
You might see them creep in or see them creep out.

And there, on the top of that ancient oak,
The Carrion Crow he sits to croak ; —
The words of his croaking I fain would know ;
What does he say — that Carrion Crow ?

He says, — and he 's merry as he can be, —
"To-night there 's a famous feast for me ;
For me and my mate so beautiful,
Where the hound lies dead by the forest-pool.

"His master he knows not where he lies,
So we shall go down to peck out his eyes ;
His master he mourneth, early and late ; —
But 't is joy to me and my beautiful mate !

"And the miller last week he killed his mare, —
She lies in a hollow, I know where, —
There 's an ancient cross of crumbling stone
Down in that hollow dank and lone !

"The mare was blind, and lame, and thin,
And she had not a bone but it pierced her skin ;
For twenty years did she come and go, —
We'll be with her anon !" croaked the Carrion Crow.

"And there bleats a lamb by the thundering linn,
The mother ewe she has tumbled in ;
Three days ago and the lamb was strong,
Now he is weak with fasting long.

"All day long he moans and calls,
And over his mother the water falls ;
He can see his mother down below,
But why she comes not he does not know.

"His little heart doth pine away,
And fainter and fainter he bleats to-day ;
So loud o'er the linn the waters brawl,
That the shepherd he hears him not at all !

"Twice I've been down to look at him,
But he glanced on me his eyeballs dim ;
And among the stones so cold and bare,
I saw the raven watching there.

"He 'll have the first peck at his black eye,
And taste of his heart before it die : —
Aha ! though the hungry raven is there,
As soon as he 's ready we 'll have our share ! "

These are the words of the Carrion Crow,
As he first croaks loud and then croaks low,
And the spiders and millepedes hear him croak,
As he sits up aloft on the ancient oak.

BUTTERCUPS AND DAISIES.

BUTTERCUPS and Daisies —

Oh the pretty flowers,
Coming ere the spring time,
To tell of sunny hours.
While the trees are leafless,
While the fields are bare,
Buttercups and Daisies
Spring up here and there.

Ere the snow-drop peepeth ;
Ere the crocus bold ;
Ere the early primrose
Opes its paly gold,
Somewhere on a sunny bank
Buttercups are bright ;
Somewhere 'mong the frozen grass
Peeps the Daisy white.

Little hardy flowers,
Like to children poor,
Playing in their sturdy health
By their mother's door :

Purple with the north-wind,
Yet alert and bold,
Fearing not and caring not,
Though they be a-cold !

What to them is weather !
What are stormy showers !
Buttercups and Daisies,
Are these human flowers !
He who gave them hardship
And a life of care,
Gave them likewise hardy strength,
And patient hearts, to bear.

Welcome, yellow Buttercups,
Welcome, Daisies white,
Ye are in my spirit
Visioned, a delight !
Coming ere the spring-time
Of sunny hours to tell —
Speaking to our hearts of HIM
Who doeth *all things well*.

THE TITMOUSE, OR BLUE-CAP.

THE merry Titmouse is a comical fellow ;
He weareth a plumage of purple and yellow,
Barred over with black, and with white interlaced ; —
Depend on 't, the titmouse has excellent taste.

And he, like his betters of noble old blood,
Keeps up, with great spirit, a family feud ;
A feud with the owl ; — and why, would you know ?
An old, by-gone quarrel of ages ago : —

Perhaps in the ark might be taken offence, —
But I know not, indeed, of the where and the whence ;
Only this is quite true, — let them meet as they may,
Having quarreled long since, they would quarrel to-day.

But we 'll leave them to settle this ancient affair,
And now look at his nest, made with exquisite care,
Of lichen, and moss, and the soft downy feather,
And the web of the spider to keep it together.

Is a brick out of place by your window ? — don't send
For the man with the trowel the fracture to mend ;

Through the dry months of summer just leave it
alone,
For the poor little titmouse has made it his own.

Peep in, now, and look at that wonderful labor,
And be glad to have near you so merry a neighbor;
His work unto him is no trouble — behold
For one moment his motions, so tricky and bold.

How he twists, how he turns with a harlequin grace;
He can't lift a feather without a grimace;
He carries the moss in his bill with an air,
And he laughs at the spider he robs of his lair.

See his round, burley head, that is like a friar Tuck,
And his glancing black eye, that is worthy of Puck;
Saw you ever a merrier creature than he?
Oh, no! — make him welcome as welcome can be.

His nest now is finished with fine cobweb thread,
And the eggs are laid in it, white, speckled with red;
Now knock at the wall, or rap loud on the pane,
Hark! what is that rapping so briskly again?

'T is the blithe mother-bird, all alive and alert,
As her mate, every whit, is she comic and pert:
Rap you once, she raps twice; she has nothing to do
But to keep her eggs warm, and be neighborly too.

Oh, what! did you say that the titmouse was steal-
ing,
That he ate your pear-buds while he shammed to be
reeling,
And nipped off the apricot-bloom in his fun? —
And that shortly you 'll end his career with a gun!

Oh! hold back your hand, 't were a deed to repent;
Of your blame the poor fellow is quite innocent.
Stand back for one moment — anon he'll be here,
He believes you his friend, and he thinks not of fear.

Here he comes! See how drolly he looketh askew;
And now hangs head downward; now glances on
you.
Be not rash, though he light on your apricot bough,
Though he touches a bud — there, he touches it now!

There, he's got what he wanted, and off he has
flown!
Now look at the apricot bud, — is it gone?
Not the apricot-bud, — but the grub that was in it!
You may thank him — he does you a service each
minute.

Then love the poor titmouse, and welcome him too,
Great beauty there is in his yellow and blue;
He's a fine cheerful fellow — so let him be free
Of your garden — to build in your wall or your tree!

SUNSHINE.

I love the sunshine everywhere, —
In wood, and field, and glen ;
I love it in the busy haunts
Of town-imprisoned men.

I love it when it streameth in
The humble cottage door,
And casts the chequered casement shade
Upon the red-brick floor.

I love it where the children lie
Deep in the clovery grass,
To watch among the twining roots
The gold-green beetles pass.

I love it on the breezy sea,
To glance on sail and oar,
While the great waves, like molten glass,
Come leaping to the shore.

I love it on the mountain-tops,
Where lies the thawless snow,
And half a kingdom, bathed in light,
Lies stretching out below.

And when it shines in forest-glades,
Hidden, and green, and cool,
Through mossy boughs and veined leaves,
How is it beautiful !

How beautiful on little streams,
When sun and shade at play,
Make silvery meshes, while the brook
Goes singing on its way.

How beautiful, where dragon-flies
Are wondrous to behold,
With rainbow wings of gauzy pearl,
And bodies blue and gold !

How beautiful, on harvest-slopes,
To see the sunshine lie ;
Or on the paler reaped fields,
Where yellow shocks stand high !

Oh, yes ! I love the sunshine :
Like kindness or like mirth
Upon a human countenance,
Is sunshine on the earth !

Upon the earth, upon the sea,
And through the crystal air,
On piled-up cloud, the gracious sun
Is glorious everywhere !

THE ELEPHANT.

ELEPHANT, thou sure must be
Of the Titan progeny ;
One of that old race that sleep,
In the fossil mountains deep !
Elephant, thou must be one —
Kindred to the Mastadon —
One that didst in friendship mix
With the huge Megalonix ;
With the Mammoth hadst command
O'er the old-world forest-land.
Thou those giant ferns didst see,
Taller than the tallest tree ;
And with up-turned trunk didst browse
On the reed-palm's lowest boughs ;
And didst see, up-curved from light,
The ever-sleeping ammonite ;
And those dragon-worms at play
In the waters old and grey !

Tell me, creature, in what place
Thou, the Noah of thy race,
Wast preserved when death was sent
Like a raging element,

Like a whirlwind passing by, —
In the twinkling of an eye
Leaving mother-earth forlorn
Of her mighty eldest-born ; —
Turning all her life to stone
With one universal groan !
In what cavern drear and dark,
Elephant, hadst thou thine ark ?
Dost thou in thy memory hold
Record of that tale untold ?
If thou do, I pray thee tell,
It were worth the knowing well.

Elephant, so old and vast,
Thou a kindly nature hast ;
Grave thou art, and strangely wise,
With observant serious eyes,
Somewhat in thy brain must be
Of an old sagacity.
Thou art solemn, wise and good ;
Thou liv'st not on streaming blood ;
Thou, and all thine ancient frere,
Were of natures unsevere ;
Preying not on one another ;
Nourished by the general mother
Who gave forests thick and tall,
Food and shelter for you all.

Elephant, if thou hadst been
Like the tiger fierce and keen,

Like the lion of the brake,
Or the deadly rattle-snake,
Ravenous as thou art strong,
Terror would to thee belong ;
And before thy mates and thee,
All the earth would desert be !
But instead, thou yield'st thy will,
Tractable, and peaceful still ;
Full of good intent, and mild
As a humble little child ;
Serving with obedience true,
Aiding, loving, mourning too ;
For each noble sentiment
In thy good, great heart is blent !

THE WILD SWAN.

Fair flows the river,
Smoothly gliding on ;
Green grow the bulrushes
Around the stately swan.
What an isle of beauty
The noble bird hath formed,
The greenest trees and stateliest
Grow all the isle around.

Low bend the branches
In the water bright,
Up comes the swan sailing,
Plumy all and white.
Like a ship at anchor,
Now he lies at rest,
And little waves seem daintily
To play about his breast.

Wild bird of beauty,
Strong, and glad, and free ;
Dwelling on these waters, —
How pleasant it must be !
Like a gleam of sunshine
In shadow passing on, —

Like a wreath of snow thou art,
Wild and graceful swan !

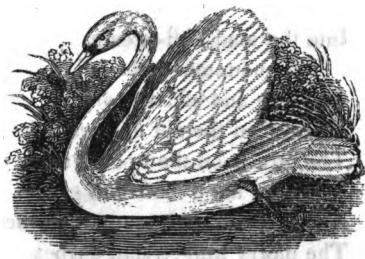
Thick grow the flowers
 'Neath the chesnut shade ;
Green grow the bulrushes
 Where thy nest is made :
Lovely ye, and loving, too,
 The mother bird and thee,
Watching o'er your cygnet brood,
 Beneath the river tree.

Kings made laws a-many,
 Laws both stern and strong,
In the days of olden time,
 You to keep from wrong ;
And o'er their palace-waters
 Ye went, a gallant show,
And Surrey and his Geraldine
 Beheld ye sailing slow.

Tell me, swan, I pray thee,
 Art of that high race,
Or a sylvan creature
 From some far, lone place ?
Saw ye in woody Athelney
 True Alfred's care and pain ?
Or, riding out among his men,
 Good king Canute, the Dane ?

No, from 'mid the icebergs,
Through long ages piled,
Sometime ye were driven
By the winter wild ;
From where the ermine hunters
On their far journeys go ;
From where the reindeer-sledges speed
O'er the wastes of snow :

From northern wildernesses,
Wild, lone and drear,
Ice-lakes, cold and gleaming,
Ye have hastened here.
The pleasant streams of England
Your homeward flight have stayed,
And here among the bulrushes
Your English nest is made.



THE MILL-STREAM.

Long trails of cistus flowers
Creep on the rocky hill ;
And beds of strong spearmint
Grow round about the mill ;
And from a mountain tarn above,
As peaceful as a dream,
Like to child unruly,
Though schooled and counseled truly,
Foams down the wild mill-stream !
The wild mill-stream, it dasheth
In merriment away,
And keeps the miller and his son
So busy all the day !

Into the mad mill-stream
The mountain-roses fall ;
And fern and adder's tongue
Grow on the old mill-wall.
The tarn is on the upland moor,
Where not a leaf doth grow ;
And through the mountain-gashes,
The merry mill-stream dashes

Down to the sea below :
But in the quiet hollows
The red trout groweth prime,
For the miller and the miller's son
To angle when they 've time.

Then fair befall the stream
That turns the mountain-mill ;
And fair befall the narrow road
That windeth up the hill !
And good luck to the countryman,
And to his old grey mare,
That upward toileth steadily,
With meal-sacks laden heavily,
In storm as well as fair !
And good luck to the miller,
And to the miller's son ;
And ever may the mill-wheel turn
While mountain-waters run !

SUMMER.

THEY may boast of the spring-time when flowers are
the fairest,

And birds sing by thousands on every green tree ;
They may call it the loveliest, the greenest, the rarest ;
But the summer's the season that's dearest to me !

For the brightness of sunshine ; the depth of the
shadows ;

The crystal of waters ; the fullness of green,
And the rich flowery growth of the old pasture
meadows,

In the glory of summer can only be seen.

Oh, the joy of the green-wood ! I love to be in it,
And list to the hum of the never-still bees,
And to hear the sweet voice of the old mother linnet,
Calling unto her young 'mong the leaves of the
trees !

To see the red squirrel frisk hither and thither,
And the water-rat plunging about in his mirth ;
And the thousand small lives that the warm summer
weather
Calls forth to rejoice on the bountiful earth !

Then the mountains, how fair ! to the blue vault of
heaven
Towering up in the sunshine, and drinking the
light,
While adown their deep chasms, all splintered and
riven,
Fall the far-gleaming cataracts silvery white !

And where are the flowers that in beauty are glowing
In the garden and fields of the young, merry spring,
Like the mountain-side wilds of the yellow broom
blowing,
And the old forest-pride, the red wastes of the ling ?

Then the garden, no longer 't is leafless and chilly,
But warm with the sunshine and bright with the
sheen
Of rich flowers, the moss-rose and the bright tiger-
lily,
Barbaric in pomp as an Ethiop Queen.

Oh, the beautiful flowers, all colors combining,
The larkspur, the pink, and the sweet mignonette,

And the blue fleur-de-lis, in the warm sunlight shining
As if grains of gold in its petals were set !

Yes, the summer, — the radiant summer 's the fairest,
For green woods and mountains, for meadows and
bowers,

For waters, and fruits, and for flowers the rarest,
And for bright shining butterflies, lovely as flowers !

THE FALCON.

HARK! hark! the merry warder's horn
Far o'er the wooded hills is borne,
Far o'er the slopes of ripening corn,
 On the free breeze away!
The bolts are drawn; the bridge is o'er
The sullen moat, — and steeds a score
Stand saddled at the castle-door,
 For 't is a merry day!

With braided hair of gold or jet,
There's many a May and Margaret,
Before her stately mirror set,
 With waiting-woman by;
There's scarlet cloak, and hat and hood;
And riding-dress of camlet good,
Green as the leaf within the wood,
 To shroud those ladies high.

And presently they are arrayed,
And plaits are smoothed and folds are laid,
And all the merry gabble stayed
 That showered down like rain;

And down the stately stairs they go,
Where dainty pages stand a-row,
To greet them with obeisance low,
And follow in the train.

And then into the castle-hall,
Come crowding gallant knights and tall,
Equipped as for a festival,
For they will hawk to-day.
And then outbreaks a general din
From those without, as those within
Upon the terrace-steps are seen,
In such a bright array !

The kenneled hounds' long bark is heard ;
The falconer talking to his bird ;
The neighing steeds ; the angry word
Of grooms impatient there.
But soon the bustle is dismissed ; —
The falconer sets on every wrist
A hooded hawk, that 's stroked and kissed
By knight and lady fair.

And sitting in their saddles free,
The brave, the fair of high degree,
Forth rides that gallant company,
Each with a bird in hand ;
And falconers with their hawking-gear,
And other birds bring up the rear ;

And country-folk from far and near
Fall in and join the band.

And merrily thus in shine and shade,
Gay glancing through the forest glade,
On rides the noble cavalcade,
To moorlands wild and gray ;
And then the noble sport is high !
The jess is loosed, the hood thrown by ;
And *leurre* the jolly falconers cry ;
And wheeling round the falcons fly,
Impatient of their prey.

A moment and the quarry's ta'en ;
The falconer's cry sounds forth amain ;
The true hawk soars and soars again,
Nor once the game is missed !
And thus the jocund day is spent,
In jolly sport and merriment :
And baron bold were well content
To fell his wood and pawn his rent
For the hawk upon his wrist !

Oh gay goshawk and tercel bold,
Then might ye rule it as ye "wold" ;
Then sate ye on a perch of gold,
And kings were your compeers !
But that was in the days gone by ;
The days of Norman chivalry,

When the low crouched unto the high ; —
The times of other years !

Oh gay gos-hawk, your days were when
Came down at night the ruffian men,
To slay the sleeping children then
Lying in London Tower ;
Yours were the days of civil feud ;
Of Rufus slain within the wood ;
Of servile John ; of Robin Hood ;
Of Woodstock's bloody bower !

Oh gay goshawk, you but belong
To troubadour and minstrel song ;
To shirt of mail and hauberk strong ;
To moat and castle-wall ;
To serf and baron, page and dame ;
To abbot sleek as spaniel tame ;
To kings who could not sign their name ;
To times of wrong and thrall !

Times are not now as they were then ;
Ours is a race of different men,
Who loathe the sword and love the pen ;
For right, not rapine, bold.
No more, as then, the ladies bright
Work tapestry-work from morn till night ;
The very children read and write,
Like learned clerks of old !

Oh, falcon proud, and goshawk gay,
Your pride of place has passed away ;
The lone wood is your home by day,
 Your resting-perch by night ;
The craggy rock your castle-tower ;
The gay, green wood your ladies' bower ;
Your own wild will, the master-power
 That can control your flight !

Yet, noble bird, old fame is thine ;
Still livest thou in the minstrel's line ;
Still in old pictures art the sign
 Of high and pure degree ;
And still, with kindling hearts we read
How barons came to Runymede,
Falcon on wrist to do the deed
 That made all England free !

THE CHILD AND THE FLOWERS.

Put by thy work, dear mother,
Dear mother come with me,
For I've found within the garden,
The beautiful sweet pea !

And rows of stately hollyhocks
Down by the garden-wall,
All yellow, white, and crimson,
So many-hued and tall !

And bending on their stalks, mother,
Are roses white and red ;
And pale-stemmed balsams, all a-blow,
On every garden-bed.

Put by thy work, I pray thee,
And come out, mother dear !
We used to buy these flowers,
But they are growing here !

Oh, mother ! little Amy would
Have loved these flowers to see ; —
Dost remember how we tried to get
For her a pink sweet-pea ?

Dost remember how she loved
Those rose-leaves pale and sere ?
I wish she had but lived to see
The lovely roses here !

Put by thy work, dear mother,
And wipe those tears away ;
And come into the garden
Before 't is set of day !



THE FLAX-FLOWER.

O the little flax-flower,
 It groweth on the hill,
And be the breeze awake or sleep,
 It never standeth still.
It groweth, and it groweth fast ;
 One day it is a seed,
And then a little grassy blade,
 Scarce better than a weed.
But then out comes the flax-flower,
 As blue as is the sky ;
And " 't is a dainty little thing ! "
 We say as we go by.

Ah, 't is a goodly little thing,
 It groweth for the poor,
And many a peasant blesses it,
 Beside his cottage door.
He thinketh how those slender stems
 That shimmer in the sun,
Are rich for him in web and woof,
 And shortly shall be spun.
He thinketh how those tender flowers,
 Of seed will yield him store ;
And sees in thought his next year's crop
 Blue shining round his door.

Oh, the little flax-flower !

The mother, then says she,
"Go pull the thyme, the heath, the fern,
But let the flax-flower be !

It groweth for the children's sake,

It groweth for our own ;
There are flowers enough upon the hill,
But leave the flax alone !

The farmer hath his fields of wheat,
Much cometh to his share ;

We have this little plot of flax,
That we have tilled with care.

"Our 'squire he hath the holt and hill,
Great halls and noble rent ;

We only have the flax-field,
Yet therewith are content ;

We watch it morn, we watch it night,
And when the stars are out,

The good man and the little ones,
They pace it round about ;

For it we wish the sun to shine,
For it the rain to fall ;

Good lack ! for who is poor doth make
Great count of what is small."

Oh, the goodly flax-flower !

It groweth on the hill,

And, be the breeze awake or sleep,
It never standeth still !
It seemeth all astir with life,
As if it loved to thrive ;
As if it had a merry heart
Within its stem alive !
Then fair befall the flax-field,
And may the kindly showers
Give strength unto its shining stem,
Give seed unto its flowers !

It is so rare a thing now-a-days to see flax grown in any quantity that my English readers will not feel the full force of the above little poem. The English cottager has not often ground which he can use for this purpose ; and, besides, he can purchase calico for the wear of his family at a much cheaper cost than he could grow flax. Nor is the English woman "handy" at such matters. She would think it a great hardship to till perhaps the very ground upon which it was grown ; to pull it with the help of her children only, and, to her other household cares and occupations, to add those of preparing, spinning, and, it might be, to help even to weave it into good homespun cloth. Seventy or eighty years ago, however, this was not uncommon in England ; and it is still common, and

in some districts even general, in Scotland. Burns alludes to the growth of flax in many of his poems ; and in the "Cottar's Saturday Night," the mother reckons the age of the cheese from the time of the flax flowering.

The household interest which is taken in the flax-field presented itself strongly to us in many a wild glen, and in many a desolate mountain-side in the highlands of Scotland, in the summer of 1836. You came, in the midst of those stony and heathy wildernesses, upon a few turf-erections, without windows and without chimneys ; the wild grasses of the moor and the heath itself grew often upon the roof, for all had originally been cut from the mountain side ; and but for the smoke which issued from the door, or the children that played about it, you might have doubted of its being a human dwelling. Miserable, however, as such homes may appear at first sight, they are, as it were, the natural growth of the mountain-moor-land, and the eye soon finds in them much that is picturesque and characteristic.

About such places as these are frequently, too, patches of cultivated ground ; the one of potatoes, and perhaps oats and barley, the other of flax. Thus grow, at the very door of this humble human tenement the food and clothing of the family. How essential this growth is to them, may be seen from the nature of the ground. It is frequently

the most difficult that can be conceived to bring into cultivation — one mass, as it seems, of stones, with the scantiest intermixture of soil. These stones, many of which are of immense size, are with infinite toil and patience gathered from the earth, and piled into walls round the little fields, otherwise the mountain sheep, and perhaps the wild roes, would soon lay the whole waste. Here the mother, as well as the father, labors; and, indeed, the flax seems especially to belong to her, for she must spin it before she can convert it into family use.

In the same way is the household provided with woolen garments; they are all home-spun and home made, even to many a goodly tartan. The "tarry woo" of Scotland, like the "lint-flower," is a national thing: the affections, as well as the fireside interests, of that country are connected with them.

THE HOUSE SPARROW.

In birds as men there is a strange variety,
In both your dandies and your *petits maitres* ;
Your clowns, your grooms, in feathered legs or
gaiters ;
Your hawks, and gulls, and harpies, to satiety.
On sea or land, it matters not an ace,
You find the feathered or unfeathered race
Of bipeds, showing every form and figure,
But everywhere the sharp-clawed and the bigger —
Falcons that shoot, and men that pull the trigger —
Still pressing on the lesser and forlorn !
'T is hard to bear, and yet it must be borne,
Although we walk about in wrath and scorn,
To see the hectoring, lording, and commotion
Forever going on in earth or ocean !
The conquerors fierce ; those thievish chaps, the
lawyers,
That chirp and gabble, wheedle and bamboozle ;
The jackdaw race of pleaders, the pert cawyers
In their gray wigs, the sober rooks that puzzle :

Land-sharks, and pirates both of sea and land ;
Your cormorants acting the sedate and grand :
The singers, and the Paganinis,
Who filch your fruit, and pocket up your guineas ;
The tomtit, mime ; — the wren, small poet ;
The silly creatures that by scores
Nurse cuckoo-imps, that out of doors
Have turned their children, and they never know it !

I walk in cities, 'mong the human herds,
And then I think of birds :
I walk in woods among the birds, and then
I think of men !
'T is quite impossible in one or other
To walk and see not — man and bird are brother.
The owl can't see in daylight ; —
Oh no ! he's blind and stupid —
A very fool, — a blockhead plain to see !
But just step out and look at him at night,
When all the world is slumbering, save he —
My word ! you'll find him then as brisk as Cupid !
With open eyes and beak that has the knack
To snap up mouse or rabbit by the back !
The owl in hollow oak — the man in den,
Chamber, or office, dusky and obscure,
Are creatures very heavy and demure ;
But soon their turn comes round, and then,
Oh, what sharp claw and pitiless beak have they
To feather, fleece, and worry up their prey !

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,"
So sang the noble bard, who, like the swallow,
Flew through far climes and soared where few can
follow.

'T is true ; and therefore still we find
That gentle spirits love the robin,
That comes, as Wordsworth says, "when winds are
sobbing ;"

Pecks at your window ; sits upon your spade,
And often thanks you in a serenade.
But what is it that brings about you
That pert, conceited good-for-nothing Sparrow,
Which seems to say, "I'd do as well without you,"
Yet, never for a second,
Night or day,
Will be away,
Though hooted, shot at, nor once coaxed or beckoned ?
In town or country — in the densest alley
Of monstrous London — in the loneliest valley —
On palace-roof — on cottage-thatch,
On church or chapel — farm or shop,
The Sparrow's still "the bird on the house-top."
I think 't was Solomon who said so,
And in the bible having read so,
You find that his ubiquity
Extends itself far up into antiquity.
Yes, through all countries and all ages
While other birds have sung in woods or cages,

This noisy, impudent, and shameless varlet
Though neither noble, rich, nor clad in scarlet,
Would have the highest place without the asking.
Upon your roof the lazy scamp is basking —
Chirping, scuffling, screaming, fighting,
Flying and fluttering up and down
From peep of day to evening brown.
You may be sleeping, sick, or writing,
And needing silence — there's the sparrow
Just at your window — and enough to harrow
The soul of Job in its severest season.
There — as it seemeth, for no other reason
But to confound you — he has got,
Up in the leaden gutter burning hot,
Every low scapegrace of the sparrow clan,
Loons of all ages, grandsire, boy and man,
Old beldame Sparrow, wenches bold,
All met to wrangle, raffle, rant and scold.
Send out your man — shoot ! blow to powder
The villainous company, that fiercer, louder,
Drive you distracted. There — bang ! goes the gun,
And all the little lads are on the run
To see the slaughter ; — not a bird is slain —
There were some feathers flew — a leg was broke,
But all went off as if it were a joke —
In comes your man — and there they are again !

Of all the creatures that were ever set
Upon two legs, there's nothing to be met,

Save some congeners in our own sweet race,
Made of such matter, common, cocket, base,
As are these Sparrows ! Would that some magician,
Philosopher or chemist would but show us
What 't is that constitutes the composition
Of certain men in town, who drive, or row us,
Cads, jarvies, porters of a low degree,
Haunters of theatre, tavern, and coach-doors,
Men all alert in dust and misery ;
Men made to elbow, bustle, cheat or steal,
Careless of scorn, incapable to feel
Indignity or shame — vulgar and vain,
Hunger and cold their only sense of pain.

Just of this class, amongst all feathered things,
Is this Jack Sparrow. He's no bird that sings,
He makes no grand pretences ; has no fine
Airs of high breeding, — he but wants to dine.
His dress is brown, his body stiff and stout,
Coarse in his nature, made to prog about.
What are his delicate fancies ? who e'er sees
The Sparrow in his sensibilities ?
There are the nightingales, all soul and song,
Moaning and warbling the green boughs among.
There are the larks, that, on ethereal wing,
Sing to high Heaven as heavenly spirits sing ;
There are the merle, the mavis, birds whose lays
Inspired the minstrel songs of other days.

There are the wandering tribes, the cuckoo sweet ;
Swallows that singing on your chimnies meet,
Through spring and summer, and anon are flown
To lands and climes to sages yet unknown.
Those are your poets — birds of genius ; — those
That have their nerves and feel refined woes.
But these Jack Sparrows, — why, they love, far more
Than all this singing nonsense, your barn-door !
They love your cherry tree, your rows of peas,
Your ripening corn crop, and to live at ease !
You find no Sparrow in the far-off woods —
No, he's not fond of hungry solitudes.
He better loves the meanest hamlet ; where
Aught's to be had, the Sparrow will be there,
Sturdy and bold, and wrangling for his share.
The tender linnet bathes her sides and wings
In running brooks and purest forest springs.
The Sparrow rolls and scuffles in the dust —
That is his washing, or his proper rust.

Before your carriage, as you drive to town,
To his base meal the Sparrow settles down ;
He knows the safety-distance to an inch,
Up to that point he will not move or flinch ;
You think your horse will crush him — no such
thing ;
That coachman's whip might clip his fluttering wing,
Or take his head off in a twink — but he
Knows better still, and liveth blithe and free.

At home he plagues the martins with his noise —
They build, he takes possession and enjoys ;
Or if he want it not, he takes it still,
Just because teasing others is his will.
From hour to hour, from tedious day to day,
He sits to drive the rightful one away.
At home, abroad, wherever seen or heard,
Still is the Sparrow just the self-same bird ;
Thievish and clamorous, hardy, bold, and base,
Unlike all others of the feathered race.
The bully of his tribe — to all beyond
The gipsey, beggar, knave, and vagabond !

It may be thought that I have here dealt hard measure to the Sparrow, but the character I have given of him will be recognized, by those who know him, as true. Cowper calls them a thievish race, that, scare as often as you please,

As oft return, a pert, voracious kind :

and that every farmer knows them to be. What multitudes do you see dropping down upon or rising from the wheat as it is ripening in the fields. Formerly a price was set upon their heads, and eggs, by country parishes. In many places a penny was given for a Sparrow's head, and the same for three or four eggs ; but this is now done away with, and

the farmer must destroy them himself, or pay dearly for it in his corn.

Nothing can exceed the self-complacence of this bird. You see him build his nest amongst the richest tracery of a church roof or window ; within the very coronet or escutcheon set up over the gate of hall or palace. We saw, this summer, the hay and litter of his nest hanging out from the richly-cut initial letters of William and Mary, over one of the principal windows of Hampton Court. Nay, he would build in a span-new V. R. set up only yesterday, or in the queen's very crown itself, though it were worth a kingdom, if it were only conveniently placed for his purpose. He thinks nothing too good for him.

But the most provoking part of his character is, the pleasure which he takes in teasing, molesting, and hectoring over birds of the most quiet and in-offensive nature. He builds about your houses, and thinks no other bird has any business to do the same. The martin, which loves to build under the eaves of our dwellings, after crossing the seas from some far country, has especially to bear his insolence and aggressions. There is a pretty story in the "Evenings at Home," of two of these interesting birds, who had their nest usurped by a Sparrow, getting together their fellows, and building him up in the nest, where he was left a prisoner amid his

plunder. But the gentleness of the martin is so great, that such an instance of poetical justice is more curious than likely to occur a second time. But every summer the Sparrow lords it over the martin, and frequently drives it away by its impertinence. We watched his behavior this year with a good deal of attention. Two pairs of martins came and built their nests beneath the eaves of the stable, near each other. Scarcely were the nests half finished, when several sparrows were seen watching on the tiles close to them, chirping loudly and conceitedly, and every now and then flying at the martins. The nests, however, were completed ; but no sooner was this done, than the sparrows took possession of them and lined them with coarse hay, which is an abomination to the martin, which lines its nest with the softest feathers. Having witnessed this, we waited for about ten days, by which time we supposed the sparrows would have laid their eggs ; and a ladder was set up, in order to inflict just retribution on them, by taking the whole. But to our surprise, there was none. The hay was therefore carefully removed, that the martins, if they pleased, might retake possession ; but the very next day, the nests were again filled with hay, and long bents of it hung dangling from the entrance-hole. The sparrows had, with wonderful assiduity and as it were with a feeling of vindictive spite, relined

the nests with as much hay as they ordinarily carry to their own nests in several days. Now it was supposed they would really lay in these nests, but no such thing,—they never did. Their only object had been to dislodge the martins, for it was found that these very sparrows had nests of their own in the water-spouts of the house, with young ones in them, at the very time, and their purpose of ousting the martins from their own nests being accomplished, the hay remained in the nests quietly all summer.

But this was not all. The poor martins, driven from the stable, came now to the house; and, as if for special protection, began to build their nests under the roof, nearly over the front door. No sooner was this intention discovered by the sparrows, than they were all in arms again. They were seen watching for hours on the tiles just above, chirping, strutting to and fro, flying down upon the martins when they came to their nests with materials, and loudly calling upon their fellow sparrows to help them to be as offensive as possible. The martins, however, rendered now more determined, persisted in their building, and so far succeeded as to prevent the sparrows getting more than a few bents of hay into their nests when complete. The martins laid their eggs; but for several times successively, the sparrows entered in their absence, and

hoisted out all the eggs, which, of course, fell to the ground and were dashed to pieces. Provoked at this mischievous propensity of the sparrows, we now had them shot at, which had the desired effect. One or two of them were killed,—the rest took the hint, and permitted the martins to hatch and rear their young in peace.

CHILDHOOD.

Oh, when I was a little child,
My life was full of pleasure ;
I had four-and-twenty living things,
And many another treasure.

But chiefest was my sister dear —
Oh, how I loved my sister !
I never played at all with joy,
If from my side I missed her !

I can remember many a time,
Up in the morning early, —
Up in the morn by break of day,
When summer dew's hung pearly ;

Out in the fields, what joy it was,
While the cowslip yet was bending,
To see the large round moon grow dim,
And the early lark ascending !

I can remember, too, we rose
When the winter stars shone brightly ;
'T was an easy thing to shake off sleep,
From spirits strong and sprightly.

How beautiful were those winter skies,
All frosty-bright and unclouded,
And the garden-trees, like cypresses,
Looked black, in the darkness shrouded !

Then the deep, deep snows were beautiful,
That fell through the long night stilly,
When behold, at morn, like a silent plain,
Lay the country wild and hilly !

And the fir-trees down by the garden side,
In their blackness towered more stately ;
And the lower trees were feathered with snow
That were bare and brown so lately.

And then when the rare hoar-frost would come,
'T was all like a dream of wonder,
When over us grew the crystal trees,
And the crystal plants grew under !

The garden all was enchanted land ;
All silent and without motion,
Like a sudden growth of the stalactite,
Or the corallines of ocean !

'T was all like a fairy forest then,
Where the diamond trees were growing,
And within each branch the emerald green,
And the ruby red were glowing.

I remember many a day we spent
In the bright hay-harvest meadow ;
The glimmering heat of the noonday ground,
And the hazy depth of shadow.

I can remember, as to-day,
The corn-field and the reaping,
The rustling of the harvest-sheaves,
And the harvest-wain's upheaping ;

I can feel this hour as if I lay
Adown 'neath the hazel-bushes,
And as if we wove, for pastime wild,
Our grenadier-caps of rushes.

And every flower within that field
To my memory's eye comes fitting, —
The chiccory-flower, like a blue cockade,
For a fairy-knight befitting.

The willow-herb by the water side,
With its fruit-like scent so mellow ;
The gentian blue on the marly hill,
And the snap-dragon white and yellow.

I know where the hawthorn groweth red ;
Where pink grows the way-side yarrow ;
I remember the wastes of woad and broom,
And the shrubs of the red rest-harrow.

I know where the blue geranium grows,
And the stork's-bill, small and musky ;
Where the rich osmunda groweth brown,
And the wormwood white and dusky.

There was a forest anigh our home, —
A forest so old and hoary, —
How we loved in its ancient glooms to be,
And remember its bygone story !

We sate in the shade of its mighty trees,
When the summer noon was glowing,
And heard in the depths of its undergrowth
The pebbly waters flowing.

We quenched our thirst at the forest-well ;
We ate of the forest berry ;
And the time we spent in the good green-wood,
Like the times of song, were merry.

We had no crosses then, no cares ;
We were children like yourselves then ;
And we danced and sang, and made us mirth,
Like the dancing-moonlight elves then.

BIRDS.

Oh, the sunny summer time !
Oh, the leafy summer time !
Merry is the bird's life,
When the year is in its prime !
Birds are by the water-falls
Dashing in the rainbow spray ;
Everywhere, everywhere,
Light and lovely there are they !
Birds are in the forest old,
Building in each hoary tree ;
Birds are on the green hills ;
Birds are by the sea !

On the moor and in the fen,
'Mong the whortleberries green ;
In the yellow furze-bush,
There the joyous bird is seen ;
In the heather, on the hill ;
All among the mountain thyme ;
By the little brook-sides,
Where the sparkling waters chime ;

In the crag ; and on the peak,
Splintered, savage, wild, and bare,
There the bird with wild wing
Wheelet through the air.

Wheelet through the breezy air,
Singing, screaming in his flight,
Calling to his bird-mate,
In a troubleless delight !
In the green and leafy wood,
Where the branching ferns up-curl,
Soon as is the dawning,
Wakes the mavis and the merle ;
Wakes the cuckoo on the bough ;
Wakes the jay with ruddy breast ;
Wakes the mother ring-dove
Brooding on her nest !

Oh, the sunny summer time !
Oh, the leafy summer time !
Merry is the bird's life
When the year is in its prime !
Some are strong and some are weak ;
Some love day and some love night ;
But whate'er a bird is,
Whate'er loves — it has delight
In the joyous song it sings ;
In the liquid air it cleaves ;

In the sunshine ; in the shower ;
In the nest it weaves !

Do we wake ; or do we sleep ;
Go our fancies in a crowd
After many a dull care, —
Birds are singing loud !
Sing then linnet ; sing then wren ;
Merle and mavis, sing your fill ;
And thou, rapturous skylark,
Sing and soar up from the hill !
Sing, oh, nightingale, and pour
Out for us sweet fancies new !—
Singing thus for us, birds,
We will sing for you !

THE WOODPECKER.

THE Woodpecker green, he has not his abiding
Where the owls and the bats from the daylight are
hiding ;
Where the bright mountain-streams glide on the
rock-beds away ,
The dark water-ousel may warble and play ;
In the sedge of the river the reed-sparrow build ;
And the peewit among the brown clods of the field ;
The sea-gull may scream on the breast of the tide ;
On the foam-crested billows the peterel may ride ;
But the Woodpecker asketh nor river nor sea ;
Give him but the old forest, and old forest-tree,
And he 'll leave to the proud lonely eagle the height
Of the mist-shrouded precipice splintered and white ;
And he 'll leave to the gorcock the heather and fern,
And the lake of the valley to woodcock and hern ;
To the skylark he 'll leave the wide fields of the air,
The sunshine and rainbow ne'er tempted him there.
The greenwood for him is the place of his rest,
And the broad-branching tree is the home he loves
best.

Let us go to the haunt of the Woodpecker green,
In those depths of the wood there is much to be seen.

There' the wild rose and woodbine weave fairy-
land bowers,
And the moth-mullein grows with its pale yellow
flowers ;
There the hum of the bees through the noon-day is
heard,
And the chirp and the cry and the song of the bird ;
There, up the tree-trunk, like a fly on the wall,
To pick the gray moss, runs the tree-creeper small ;
There the wren, golden-crested, so lovely to see,
Hangs its delicate nest from the twigs of the tree ;
And there coos the ring-dove—oh, who would not go,
That voice of the wood to hear, dreamy and low !
Yes, come to the wood—to the Woodpecker's tree,
There is joy 'mong the green leaves for thee and
for me !

Hark ! heard you that laughter so loud and so
long ? —
Again now ! — it drowneth the wood-linnet's song !
'T is the Woodpecker laughing ! — the comical elf !
His soul must be merry to laugh to himself ! —
And now we are nearer — speak low — be not heard !
Though he's merry at heart, he's a shy, timid bird.
Hark ! — now he is tapping the old, hollow tree :
One step farther on : now look upward — that's he !

Oh, the exquisite bird! — with his downward hung
head,
With his richly-dyed greens, his pale yellow and red!
On the gnarled tree-trunk, with its sober-toned
gray,
What a beautiful mingling of colors are they!
Ah, the words you have spoken have frightened the
bird —
For by him the lowest of whispers are heard;
Or a footfall as light as the breezes that pass,
Scarcely bending the flowers, he perceives on the
grass.

The squirrel above him might chatter and chide;
And the purple-winged jay scream on every side;
The great winds might blow, and the thunder might
roll,
Yet the fearless Woodpecker still cling to the bole;
But soon as a footstep that's human is heard,
A quick terror springs to the heart of the bird!
For man, the oppressor and tyrant, has made
The free harmless dwellers of nature afraid!

'Neath the fork of the branch, in the tree's hollow
bole,
Has the timid Woodpecker crept into his hole;
For there is his home in deep privacy hid,
Like a chamber scooped into a far pyramid;

And there is his mate, as secure as can be,
And his little young Woodpeckers deep in the tree.
And not till he thinks there is no one about,
Will he come to his portal and slyly peep out ;
And then, when we 're up at the end of the lane,
We shall hear the old Woodpecker laughing again.



THE HAREBELL.

(CAMPANULA ROTUNDIFOLIA.)

It springeth on the heath,
The forest-tree beneath,
Like to some elfin dweller of the wild ;
Light as a breeze astir,
Stemmed with the gossamer ;
Soft as the blue eyes of a poet's child.

The very flower to take
Into the heart, and make
The cherished memory of all pleasant places ;
Name but the light harebell,
And straight is pictured well
Where'er of fallen state lie lonely traces.

We vision wild sea-rocks,
Where hang its clustering locks,
Waving at dizzy height o'er ocean's brink ;
The hermit's scooped cell,
The forest's sylvan well,
Where the poor wounded hart came down to drink.

We vision moors far-spread,
Where blooms the heather red,
And hunters with their dogs lie down at noon ;
Lone shepherd-boys, who keep
On mountain-sides their sheep,
Cheating the time with flowers and fancies boon.

Old slopes of pasture-ground ;
Old fosse, and moat, and mound,
Where the mailed warrior and crusader came ;
Old walls of crumbling stone,
Where trails the snap-dragon ;
Rise at the speaking of the Harebell's name.

We see the sere turf brown,
And the dry yarrow's crown
Scarce raising from the stem its thick-set flowers ;
The pale hawk-weed we see,
The blue-flowered chiccory,
And the strong ivy-growth o'er crumbling towers.

Light Harebell, there thou art,
Making a lovely part
Of the old splendor of the days gone by,
Waving, if but a breeze
Pant through the chestnut trees,
That on the hill-top grow broad-branched and high.

Oh, when I look on thee,
In thy fair symmetry,
And look on other flowers as fair beside,
My sense is gratitude,
That God has been thus good,
To scatter flowers, like common blessings, wide!



THE SCREECH-OWL.

PRAY thee, Owl, what art thou doing,
With that dolefullest tu-whoo-ing ?
Dark the night is, dark and dreary,
Never a little star shines cheery ;
Wild north winds come up the hollow,
And the pelting rain doth follow ;
And the trees, the tempest braving,
To and fro are wildly waving !
Every living thing is creeping
To its den, and silence keeping,
Saving thou, the night hallooing
With thy dismalest tu-whoo-ing !

Nought I see, so black the night is,
Black the storm, too, in its might is ;
But I know there lies the forest,
Peril ever there the sorest,
Where the wild deer-stealers wander ;
And the ruin lieth yonder,
Splintered tower and crumbling column,
All among the yew-trees solemn,

Where the toad and lizard clamber
Into many an ancient chamber,
And below, the black rocks under,
Like the muttering, coming thunder,
Lowly muttering, rolling ever,
Passes on the fordless river : —
Yet I see the black night only
Covering all, so deep and lonely !

Pr'y thee, Owl, what is 't thou 'rt saying,
So terrific and dismaying ?
Dost thou speak of loss and ruin,
In that ominous tu-whoo-ing ?
While the tempest yet was stiller,
Homeward rode the kindly miller,
With his drenched meal-sacks o'er him,
And his little son before him ;
Dripping wet, yet loud in laughter,
Rode the jolly hunters after ;
And sore wet, and blown, and wildern,
Went a huddling group of children ;
But each, through the tempest's pother,
Got home safely to its mother ;
And ere afternoon was far on,
Up the mountain spurred the baron.
How can evil then betide 'em !
In their houses warm they hide 'em.
In his chimney-corner smoking,
Sits the miller, spite thy croaking ;

And the children, snug and cozy,
In their beds sleep warm and rosy ;
And the baron, with his lady,
Plays at chess, sedate and steady.

Hoot away, then, an' it cheer thee,
Only I and darkness hear thee.
Trusting Heaven, we'll fear no ruin,
Spite thy ominous tu-whoo-ing !

FLOWER PAINTINGS.

I LOVE those pictures that we see
At times in some old gallery,
Hung amid armed men of old,
And antique ladies, quaint and cold ;
'Mong furious battle-pieces, dire
With agony and blood and fire ; —
Flower pictures, painted long ago,
Though worn and old and dimmed of glow,
I love them, although art may deem
Such pictures but of light esteem.

There are the red rose and the white ;
And stems of lilies, strong and bright ;
The leaf and tendril of the vine ;
The iris and the columbine ;
The streaky tulip, gold and jet ;
The amaranth and violet ;
There is the bright jonquil ; the trail
Of bind-weed, chalice like and pale ;
The crumpled poppy, brave and bold ;
The pea ; the pink ; the marigold :

There are they grouped, in form and hue
Flower, bud, and leaf, to nature true !
Yes, although slighted and forlorn,
And oft the mark of modern scorn,
I love such pictures, and mine eye
With cold regard ne'er passed them by.
I love them most, that they present
Ever some goodly sentiment ;
The virgin-mother, young and mild :
The cradle of the holy child ;
Or, 'mid a visioned glory faint,
The meek brow of some martyred saint ;
And with their painters I can find
A kindred sympathy of mind.

Flowers are around me, bright of hue,
The quaint, old favorites and the new,
In form and color infinite,
Each one a creature of delight.
But with this fair array is brought
Full many a deep and holy thought,
And for me garden-beds and bowers,
Like the old pictures of the flowers,
Within their bloomy depths enshrine
Ever some sentiment divine !

THE BLIND BOY AND HIS SISTER.

“ OH, brother, said fair Annie,
To the blind boy at her side ;
“ Would thou could'st see the sunshine lie
On hill and valley, and the sky
Hung like a glorious canopy
O'er all things far and wide !

“ Would thou could'st see the waters
In many a distant glen ;
The mountain flocks that graze around ;
Nay, even this patch of stony ground,
These crags, with silver lichen crowned,
I would that thou could'st ken !

“ Would thou could'st see my face, brother,
As well as I see thine ;
For always what I cannot see
It is but half a joy to me.
Brother, I often weep for thee,
Yet thou dost ne'er repine ! ”

"And why should I repine, Annie?"

Said the blind boy, with a smile ;
"I ken the blue sky and the gray ;
The sunny and the misty day ;
The moorland valley stretched away
For many and many a mile !

"I ken the night and day, Annie,
For all ye may believe ;
And often in my spirit lies
A clear light as of mid-day skies ;
And splendors on my vision rise,
Like gorgeous hues of eve.

"I sit upon the stone, Annie,
Beside our cottage door,
And people say, ' that boy is blind,'
And pity me, although I find
A world of beauty in my mind,
A never-ceasing store.

"I hear you talk of mountains,
The beautiful, the grand ;
Of splintered peaks so gray and tall ;
Of lake, and glen, and waterfall ;
Of flowers and trees ; — I ken them all ;
Their difference understand.

“The harebell and the gowan
Are not alike to me,
Are different as the herd and flock,
The blasted pine-tree of the rock,
The waving birch, the broad, green oak,
The river, and the sea.

“And oh, the heavenly music,
That, as I sit alone,
Comes to mine inward sense as clear
As if the angel-voices were
Singing to harp and dulcimer
Before the mighty throne !

“It is not as of outward sound,
Of breeze, or singing bird ;
But wondrous melody refined ;
A gift of God unto the blind ;
An inward harmony of mind,
By inward senses heard !

“And all the old-world stories
That neighbors tell o’ nights ;
Of fairies on the fairy mound,
Of brownies dwelling under ground,
Of elves careering round and round,
Of fays and water-sprites :

"All this to me is pleasantness, —
Is all a merry show ;
I see the antic people of play, —
Brownie and kelpie, elf and fay,
In a sweet country far away,
Yet where I seem to go.

" But better far than this, Annie,
Is when thou read'st to me
Of the dear Saviour meek and kind,
And how he healed the lame and blind.
Am I not healed ? — for in my mind
His blessed form I see !

" Oh, love is not of sight, Annie,
Is not of outward things ;
For, in my inmost soul I know
His pity for all mortal wo ;
His words of love, spoke long ago,
Unseal its deepest springs !

" Then do not mourn for me, Annie,
Because that I am blind ; —
The beauty of all outward sight ;
The wondrous shows of day and night ;
All love, all faith, and all delight,
Are strong in heart and mind ! "

THE SPIRIT'S QUESTIONINGS.

WHERE shall I meet thee,
Thou beautiful one ?
Where shall I find thee,
For aye who art gone ?

What is the shape
To thy clear spirit given ?
Where is thy home
In the infinite heaven ?

I see thee, but still
As thou wert upon earth,
In thy bodied delight,
In thy wonder and mirth

But now thou art one
Of the glorified band,
Who have touched the shore
Of the far spirit-land !

And thy shape is fair,
And thy locks are bright,
In the living stream
Of the quenchless light.

And thy spirit's thought
It is pure and free
From darkness and doubt
And from mystery !

And thine ears have drunk
The awful tone
Of the First and Last,
Of the Ancient One !

And the dwellers old
Thy steps have met,
Where the lost is found,
And the past is yet.

Where shall I find thee,
For aye who art gone ?
Where shall I meet thee,
Thou beautiful one ?

THE POOR CHILD'S HYMN.

WE are poor and lowly born ;
With the poor we bide ;
Labor is our heritage,
Care and want beside.
What of this ? our blessed Lord
Was of lowly birth,
And poor, toiling fishermen
Were his friends on earth !

We are ignorant and young ;
Simple children all ;
Gifted with but humble powers,
And of learning small.
What of this ? our blessed Lord
Loved such as we ; —
How he blessed the little ones
Sitting on his knee !

CORN-FIELDS.

In the young merry time of spring,
When clover 'gins to burst ;
When bluebells nod within the wood,
And sweet May whitens first ;
When merle and mavis sing their fill,
Green is the young corn on the hill.

But when the merry spring is past,
And summer groweth bold,
And in the garden and the field
A thousand flowers unfold ;
Before a green leaf yet is sere,
The young corn shoots into the ear.

But then, as day and night succeed,
And summer weareth on,
And in the flowery garden beds
The red rose groweth wan,
And hollyhocks and sunflowers tall
O'ertop the mossy garden-wall :

When on the breath of autumn-breeze,
From pastures dry and brown,
Goes floating, like an idle thought,

The fair, white thistle-down ;
O, then what joy to walk at will,
Upon the golden harvest-hill !

What joy in dreamy ease to lie
Amid a field new-shorn,
And see all round, on sun-lit slopes,
The piled-up shocks of corn,
And send the fancy wandering o'er
All pleasant harvest-fields of yore.

I feel the day ; I see the field ;
The quivering of the leaves ;
And good old Jacob and his house
Binding the yellow sheaves ;
And at this very hour I seem
To be with Joseph in his dream.

I see the fields of Bethlehem,
And reapers many a one,
Bending unto their sickle's stroke,
And Boaz looking on ;
And Ruth, the Moabitess fair,
Among the gleaners stooping there.

Again : I see a little child,
His mother's sole delight ;
God's living gift of love unto

The kind, good Shunamite ;
To mortal pangs I see him yield,
And the lad bear him from the field.

The sun-bathed quiet of the hills ;
The fields of Galilee,
That eighteen hundred years ago
Were full of corn, I see,
And the dear Saviour take his way
'Mid ripe ears on the Sabbath-day.

O golden fields of bending corn,
How beautiful they seem ! —
The reaper-folk, the piled-up sheaves,
To me are like a dream ;
The sunshine and the very air
Seem of old time, and take me there !

LIFE'S MATINS.

At that sweet hour of even,
When nightingales awake,
Low bending o'er her first-born son,
An anxious mother spake.

"Thou child of prayer and blessing,
Would that my soul could know,
What the unending future holds
For thee of joy or wo.

"Thy life — will it be gladness,
A sunny path of flowers?
Or strift, with sorrow dark as death,
Through weary wintry hours?

"Oh child of love and blessing,
Young blossom of life's tree —
My spirit trembles but to think
What time may make of thee!

"Yet of the unveiled future
Would knowledge might be given!"

Then voices of the unseen ones
Made answer back from Heaven.

FIRST VOICE.

"Tears he must shed unnumbered ;
And he must strive with care,
As strived in war the armed man ;
And human wo must bear :

"Must learn that joy is mockery ;
That man doth mask his heart ;
Must prove the trusted faithless ;
And see the loved depart !

"Must feel himself alone, alone ;
Must weep when none can see ;
Then lock his grief like treasure up,
For lack of sympathy :

"Must prove all human knowledge
A burden, a deceit ;
And many a flattering friendship find
A dark and hollow cheat.

"Well may'st thou weep, fond mother ;
For what can life bequeath
But tears and sighs unnumbered,
But watching, change, and death ! "

SECOND VOICE.

" Rejoice, rejoice, fond mother,
That thou hast given birth
To this immortal being,
To this sweet child of earth !

" The pearl within the ocean,
The gold within the mine,
Have not a thousandth part the worth
Of this fair child of thine !

" Oh, fond, and anxious mother,
Look up with joyful eyes,
For a boundless wealth of love and power
In that young spirit lies !

" Love, to enfold all natures
In one benign embrace ;
Power, to diffuse a blessing wide
O'er all the human race !

" Bless God, both night and morning ;
Be thine a joyful heart ;
For the child of mortal parents hath
With the Eternal part !

" The stars shall dim their brightness ;
And as a parched scroll,

The earth shall fade, but ne'er shall fade
The undying human soul !

“ Oh then, rejoice, fond mother,
That thou hast given birth
To this immortal being,
To this fair child of earth ! ”

MABEL ON MIDSUMMER DAY.

A STORY OF THE OLDEN TIME.

PART I.

"ARISE, my maiden, Mabel,"
The mother said ; " arise,
For the golden sun of midsummer
Is shining in the skies.

"Arise, my little maiden,
For thou must speed away,
To wait upon thy grandmother
This livelong summer day.

"And thou must carry with thee
This wheaten cake so fine ;
This new-made pat of butter ;
This little flask of wine.

"And tell the dear old body,
This day I cannot come,
For the good man went out yester-morn,
And he is not come home.

"And more than this, poor Amy
Upon my knee doth lie ;
I fear me, with this fever-pain
The little child will die !

"And thou canst help thy grandmother ;
The table thou canst spread ;
Canst feed the little dog and bird,
And thou canst make her bed.

"And thou canst fetch the water
From the lady-well hard by ;
And thou canst gather from the wood
The fagots brown and dry.

"Canst go down to the lonesome glen,
To milk the mother-ewe ;
This is the work, my Mabel,
That thou wilt have to do.

"But listen, now, my Mabel,
This is Midsummer-day,
When all the fairy people
From elf-land come away.

"And when thou art in the lonesome glen,
Keep by the running burn,
And do not pluck the strawberry-flower,
Nor break the lady-fern.

"But think not of the fairy-folk,
Lest mischief should befall ;
Think only of poor Amy,
And how thou lov'st us all.

"Yet keep good heart, my Mabel,
If thou the fairies see,
And give them kindly answer
If they should speak to thee.

"And when into the fir-wood
Thou go'st for fagots brown,
Do not, like idle children,
Go wandering up and down.

"But fill thy little apron,
My child, with earnest speed ;
And that thou break no living bough
Within the wood, take heed.

"For they are spiteful brownies
Who in the wood abide,
So be thou careful of this thing,
Lest evil should betide.

"But think not, little Mabel,
Whilst thou art in the wood,
Of dwarfish, wilful brownies,
But of the Father good.

"And when thou goest to the spring
To fetch the water thence,
Do not disturb the little stream,
Lest this should give offence.

"For the queen of all the fairies,
She loves that water bright ;
I've seen her drinking there myself
On many a summer night.

"But she 's a gracious lady,
And her thou need'st not fear ;
Only disturb thou not the stream,
Nor spill the water clear !"

"Now all this I will heed, mother,
Will no word disobey,
And wait upon the grandmother
This livelong summer day !"

PART II.

Away tripped little Mabel,
With the wheaten cake so fine ;
With the new-made pat of butter,
And the little flask of wine.

And long before sun was hot,
And morning mists had cleared,
Beside the good old grandmother
The willing child appeared.

And all her mother's message
She told with right good-will,
How that the father was away,
And the little child was ill.

And then she swept the hearth up clean,
And then the table spread ;
And next she fed the dog and bird ;
And then she made the bed.

"And go now," said the grandmother,
"Ten paces down the dell,
And bring in water for the day—
Thou know'st the lady-well !"

The first time that good Mabel went,
Nothing at all saw she,
Except a bird, a sky-blue bird,
That sate upon a tree.

The next time that good Mabel went,
There sate a lady bright
Beside the well,—a lady small,
All clothed in green and white.

A curtsey low made Mabel,
And then she stooped to fill,
Her pitcher at the sparkling spring,
But no drop did she spill.

"Thou art a handy maiden,"
The fairy lady said;
"Thou hast not spilled a drop, nor yet
The fair spring troubled !

"And for this thing which thou has done,
Yet may'st not understand,
I give to thee a better gift
Than houses or than land.

"Thou shalt do well, whate'er thou dost,
As thou hast done this day ;
Shalt have the will and power to please,
And shalt be loved alway "

Thus having said, she passed from sight,
And nought could Mabel see
But the little bird, the sky-blue bird,
Upon the leafy tree.

"And now go," said the grandmother,
And fetch in fagots dry ;
All in the neighboring fir-wood,
Beneath the trees they lie."

Away went kind, good Mabel,
Into the fir-wood near,
Where all the ground was dry and brown,
And the grass grew thin and sere.

She did not wander up and down,
Nor yet a live branch pull,
But steadily, of the fallen boughs
She picked her apron full.

And when the wild-wood brownies
Came sliding to her mind,
She drove them thence as she was told,
With home-thoughts sweet and kind.

But all that while the brownies
Within the fir-wood still,
They watched her how she picked the wood,
And strove to do no ill.

"And oh, but she is small and neat,"
Said one — "'t were shame to spite
A creature so demure and meek,
A creature harmless quite !"

"Look only," said another,
"At her little gown of blue ;
At her kerchief pinned about her head,
And at her little shoe !"

"Oh, but she is a comely child,"
Said a third ; "and we will lay
A good-luck-penny in her path,
A boon for her this day,—
Seeing she broke no living wood ;
No live thing did affray !"

With that the smallest penny,
Of the finest silver ore,
Upon the dry and slippery path,
Lay Mabel's feet before.

With joy she picked the penny up,
The fairy penny good ;
And with her fagots dry and brown
Went wondering from the wood.

"Now she has that," said the brownies,
"Let flax be ever so dear,
'T will buy her clothes of the very best,
For many and many a year !"

"And go, now," said the grandmother,
"Since falling is the dew,
Go down unto the lonesome glen,
And milk the mother-ewe !"

All down into the lonesome glen,
Through copses thick and wild,

Through moist, rank grass, by trickling
streams,
Went on the willing child.

And when she came to lonesome glen,
She kept beside the burn,
And neither plucked the strawberry-flower
Nor broke the lady-fern.

And while she milked the mother-ewe
Within the lonesome glen,
She wished that little Amy
Were strong and well again.

And soon as she had thought this
thought,
She heard a coming sound,
As if a thousand fairy-folk
Were gathering all around.

And then she heard a little voice,
Shrill as the midge's wing,
That spake aloud, — "a human child
Is here ; yet mark this thing —

"The lady-fern is all unbroke,
The strawberry-flower untaken !
What shall be done for her, who still
From mischief can refrain ?"

"Give her a fairy-cake!" said one,
"Grant her a wish!" said three;
"The latest wish that she hath wished,"
Said all, "whate'er it be!"

Kind Mabel heard the words they spake,
And from the lonesome glen,
Unto the good old grandmother
Went gladly back again.

Thus happened it to Mabel
On that Midsummer-day,
And these three fairy-blessings
She took with her away.

'T is good to make all duty sweet,
To be alert and kind;
'T is good, like little Mabel,
To have a willing mind.

THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

How goodly is the earth !
Look round about and see
The green and fertile field ;
The mighty branched tree ;
The little flowers outspread
In such variety !
Behold the lovely things
That dance on airy wings ;
The birds, whose summer pleasure
Is not of stinted measure ;
The grassy vales, the hills ;
The flower-embordered rills ;
The clouds that lie at rest
Upon the noonday's breast ;
Behold all these, and know
How goodly is the earth !

How goodly is the earth !
Its mountain-tops behold ;
Its rivers broad and strong ;
Its solemn forests old ;
Its wealth of flocks and herds ;
Its precious stones and gold ;

Behold the radiant isles
With which old ocean smiles ;
Behold the seasons run
Obedient to the sun ;
The gracious showers descend ;
Life springing without end ;
By day the glorious light ;
The starry pomp by night ;—
Behold all these, and know
How goodly is the earth !

How goodly is the earth !
Yet if this earth be made
So goodly, wherein all
That is shall droop and fade ;
Wherein the glorious light
Hath still its fellow, shade ;—
So goodly, where is strife
Ever 'twixt death and life ;
Where trouble dims the eye ;
Where sin hath mastery ;
How much more bright and fair
Will be that region where
The saints of God shall rest
Rejoicing with the blessed ;
Where pain is not, nor death,—
The Paradise of God !

LITTLE CHILDREN.

SPORTING through the forest wide ;
Playing by the water-side ;
Wandering o'er the heathy fells ;
Down within the woodland dells ;
All among the mountains wild,
Dwelleth many a little child !
In the baron's hall of pride ;
By the poor man's dull fireside ;
'Mid the mighty, 'mid the mean,
Little children may be seen,
Like the flowers that spring up fair,
Bright and countless, everywhere !

In the far isles of the main ;
In the desert's lone domain ;
In the savage mountain glen,
'Mong the tribes of swarthy men ;
Wheresoe'er a foot hath gone ;
Wheresoe'er the sun hath shone
On a league of peopled ground,
Little children may be found !

Blessings on them ! they in me
Move a kindly sympathy,
With their wishes, hopes, and fears ;
With their laughter and their tears ;
With their wonder so intense,
And their small experience !

Little children, not alone
On the wide earth are ye known,
'Mid its labors and its cares,
'Mid its sufferings and its snares,
Free from sorrow, free from strife,
In the world of love and life,
Where no sinful thing hath trod ;
In the presence of your God,
Spotless, blameless, glorified,
Little children, ye abide !

L'ENVOI.

Go, little book, and to the young and kind,
Speak thou of pleasant hours and lovely
 things ;
Of fields and woods ; of sunshine ; dew and
 wind ;
Of mountains ; valleys, and of river-springs ;
Speak thou of every little bird that sings ;
Of every bright, sweet-scented flower that
 blows ;
But chiefest, speak of Him whose mercy flings
Beauty and love abroad, and who bestows
Light to the sun alike, with odor to the rose.

My little book, that hast been unto me
Even as a flower reared in a pleasant place,
This is the task that I impose on thee : —
Go forth, — with serious style or playful grace,
Winning young gentle hearts ; and bid them
 trace

With thee the Spirit of Love through earth
and air ;
On beast and bird, and on our mortal race.
So, do thy gracious work ; and onward fare,
Leaving, like angel-guest, a blessing everywhere !



